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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

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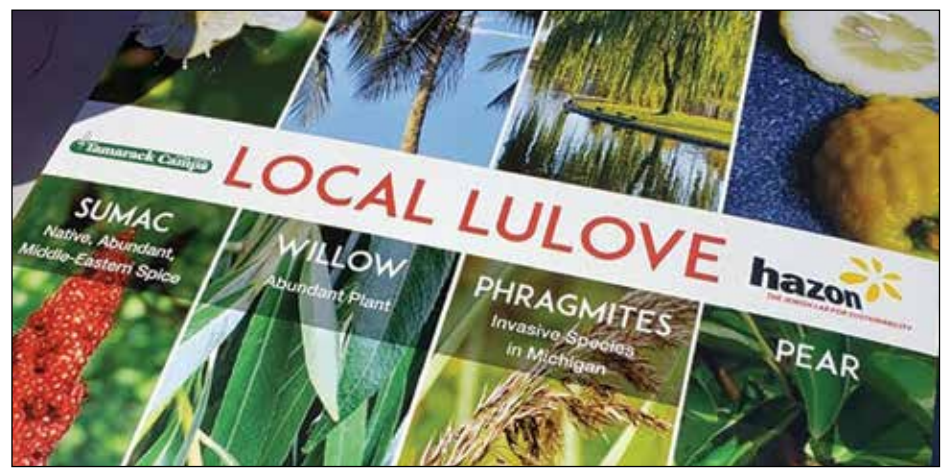
Shake Local

By Rabbi Nate DeGroot and Hazon Detroit

Our rabbis say (Tosafot, Suk. 37b) that when we shake the lulav and etrog on Sukkot, "the trees of the forest sing with joy." So that got us to wondering, what are the conditions that might allow the trees around us to sing with the greatest amount of joy during the holiday season? In a normal year on Sukkot, the United States imports upwards of 500,000 lulavim from Israel and Egypt so that we can construct our traditional lulavim bundles using the familiar palm fronds, willow, myrtle, and citron. This combination of species has become so definitional that most of us probably don't even consider that a lulav could be constructed any other way. But the original text is not so clear. In Torah (Lev 23.40), where we're first told about the four species, the text simply says:

On the first day you shall take the fruit of beautiful trees, fronds of palm-shaped trees, branches of woven trees, and valley-willows, and you shall rejoice before YHVH your God for seven days.

Nowhere does it determine, at its linguistic core, the particular species that are to be shaken. That was a later rabbinic interpretation and discussion. So then, returning to our original question: What are the conditions that might allow the trees around us to sing with the greatest amount of joy?



Importing 500,000 lulavim from over 6,000 miles away could produce an estimated 50 metric tons of carbon pollution. Does that add to the joy of the singing trees? Shaking a bundle of plant life where only one of the four species, willow, grows in Michigan — does that make for joyous tree singing? Or what would it look like and feel like to harvest species that grow nearby with our own hands, and assemble a lulav bundle that pays homage to Michigan's local plant-life, while honoring the Torah roots of the lulav instruction?

On Sukkot, we shake the lulav to bring down rain from the sky to water our crops and give us new life come spring. Do we think we'll be able to conjure more rain with plants that are foreign to this soil, or plants that were once rooted in this soil? We asked: How might using local lulavim impact our ability to connect with the earth that surrounds us and how might using local lulavim impact the forest's ability to "sing with joy"?

With all of this in mind, last year Hazon Detroit supplied local lulavim and local lulav education to a variety of programs and organizations, from synagogues to a food pantry, from a religious school to The Jewish Federation. And each time, we posed these questions and gave folks an opportunity to make and shake their own local lulav bundles. This year we also supplied lulavim made of local plants.

Of course, this is just one example of what it might look like to continue to reimagine and reconstruct a Judaism that is re-

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Power of the collective: A source of strength, resolve and renewal

by Eileen Freed and Randy Milgrom

The new Jewish year of 5781 has begun. Now comes Sukkot — a time to celebrate, but also to contemplate and experience the fragility of life, as represented by the Sukkah. Who would have anticipated, in the fall and winter of 5780, how imminently fragile we are — that a global COVID-19 pandemic would bring such tremendous instability and uncertainty, immediately changing the way we work, teach our children, care for one another, and maintain our Jewish traditions.

Schools and businesses, closed. Millions of jobs, gone. Cherished lives, lost.

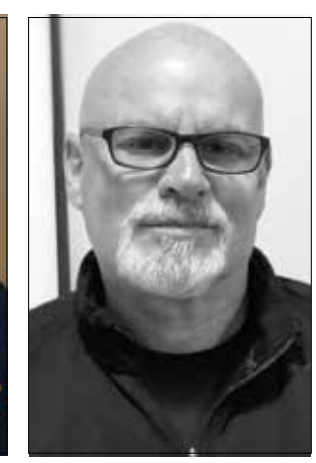
Yet we've also seen remarkable resilience and leadership. Essential workers — those who care for the sick, keep us safe, and ensure we have food on our tables — have inspired us with their courage and dedication.

Jewish congregations and organizations, both large and small, have deftly shifted programming and operations to remote platforms. Using Zoom, we've gathered to console mourners, provide crisis counseling, engage in innovative Jewish programming from around the world, and connect with family and friends in new ways.

Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) leaders quickly assembled the national networks representing the core organizations of Jewish life, as well as leading philanthropists — and swung into action. Here in Washtenaw County, with JFNA's guidance, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor (JFGAA) convened our local Jewish communal organizations and provided information and resources to successfully apply for Paycheck Protection Program loans that helped them stay solvent while continuing to pay dedicated employees even as they were forced to halt or adjust programming.

As our 2020 Annual Community Campaign was winding down, our new COVID Emergency Fund was ramping up. From its reserves, the Jewish Federation seeded the fund with $75,000 — which generous community donors more than matched with

Eileen Freed



Randy Milgrom

$83,000 of their own — to support local organizations, congregations, and individuals facing pandemic-related financial crises. Federations across the country have collectively raised $175 million in emergency funds to address the needs of their communities.

On the other side of the world, our partners at the Jewish Agency for Israel have made loans to devastated Jewish communities in Europe and South America, and the JDC has supported the struggling nonprofit sector in Israel as well as the needy in other countries. Our own 2020 Annual Community Campaign allocated funds to our partners in Israel — such as Hand in Hand Schools and Youth Futures — to help them continue to provide essential services in new ways as they likewise have adjusted to the realities of physical distancing.

As long as this crisis persists, the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor — along

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From the Editor

I am still feeling the shock wave from the erev Rosh Hashanah death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. While Justice Stephen Breyer was reciting the mourners kaddish during virtual livestreaming services with Central Synagogue in New York City, he got the call from U.S. Marshalls about the Justice's death. Soon, the entire Jewish world, and then the rest of the world would know. I am struck that because of the holiday and because so many of us were using electronic communication to be together, nearly the entire Jewish community experienced the sadness of the Justice's death together. And then thoughts of her optimism, her view of humankind's ability to move forward, one step at a time, also washed over us, together. All on the eve of a new, and fateful, year. Do yourself a favor: when you're done reading this, watch the five minute video on YouTube "Ruth Bader Ginsburg Tribute/Hallelujah, Central Synagogue- Rosh Hashanah 5781."

Clare Kinberg

I am an old-fashioned news junkie; I'm online all day reading news, and at the same time, I'm still committed to newspapers, physically held and read by members of a community. Last night I watched the 1999 documentary The Black Press: Soldiers without Swords, as a reminder of the critical role of community newspapers, as sources of advocacy, varied opinion, personal achievements and news of important current events. If you have a story you want to tell, news or an opinion you want to share, send them to me.

The Washtenaw Jewish News is entirely supported by advertising. Do you have a service or business you'd like the entire Washtenaw Jewish community to know about? Contact me. And, please, let advertisers know that you saw their ad in the WJN.

Chag sameach, find a Sukkah to enjoy, or as the article on page 4 suggests, step outside and appreciate the fall air! ■

Shake local continued from page1

sponsive to the natural world around us, and that is responsible to the global environment that we all share. How could this concept extend to other Jewish rituals and celebrations? How might it apply to other consumer choices that we make in our day to day lives?

As we transition out of this High Holiday season, a season like no other, let us not forget the core intention of this heightened period of our communal calendar — teshuva. Return, renewal, and repentance. This year, 5781, let us deepen our continued investment in the natural world, the one in our own backyards. Let us deepen our continued investment in ourselves and in each other. And let us commit to making this be a year of environmental teshuva, as we create the legacy by which future generations will remember us. ■

Rabbi Nate DeGroot is Associate Director, Spiritual & Program Director, Hazon Detroit

Letter to the Editor

Dear Washtenaw Jewish News,

I fear that recent news reports on the court case involving picketers outside an Ann Arbor synagogue tend to accept at face value the picketers' self-image as benign human rights advocates.

In fact, as public records show, the leaders and many of the followers are hard-core antisemites and neo-Nazi sympathizers. I have compiled the following information, readily available from public sources, as part of my University of Michigan research on American hate groups.

* Standing outside the synagogue, Henry Herskovitz, the picketers' leader, stated his motivation in these exact words, which on his website he acknowledged, uttering, "I hate Jews. Whatever happened to them in World War II they brought on themselves. They deserved everything they got."

* The late Ernst Zundel, a Holocaust denier and co-author of the book *The Hitler We Loved and Why*, was Germany's leading neo-Nazi and was imprisoned in Germany for inciting race hatred and denying the Holocaust. Not only did Herskovitz campaign tirelessly for Zundel's release from prison, but Herskovitz flew to Germany to meet Zundel in Mannheim prison, shake Zundel's hand, and express warm admiration. When Jewish families came to the Farmington Hills Holocaust Museum for a memorial service to honor their relatives who had been murdered by the Nazis, Herskovitz greeted them holding a sign demanding Zundel's release from prison.

* The Southern Poverty Law Center, a leading civil rights organization, listed Deir Yassin Remembered, the group that initiated the picket, on its National Register of Hate Groups. Why? Because, the SPLC explained, the group sympathizes with Nazi Germany.

* Larry Brayboy is a local political activist whom Herskovitz identified in a letter to the *Washtenaw Jewish News* as a "close friend" of the picketers. The picketers chose Brayboy to represent their views in a public debate in which he promised to prove that the Holocaust never happened and that Jews caused 9/11. Brayboy has sent endless emails to public figures attacking "jew n***s" and "jew f***ts" and explaining that it is "way past time to exterminate the 9/11 [hideous expletive] Jews of Israel."

* Paul Eisen, a Director of Deir Yassin Remembered, appeared on the radio program of David Duke, America's leading neo-Nazi. Said Eisen to Duke on the air, "I never heard you, David, say anything that I didn't think was true."

This is only the tip of the iceberg of the picketers' pervasive and incorrigibly antisemitic activities. Their leaders have seized upon the Mideast issue not because they know anything about Middle Eastern history, but because they think the issue will attract new supporters while camouflaging their true motives. As a major community organ, I hope that you will provide a full and accurate account of their ideology that has now resulted in a federal court case.

That Ann Arbor has done absolutely nothing to help the synagogue during an ordeal now in its 17th year, that community leaders have remained silent in the face of endless hate group provocation, is, in my opinion, a frightening reproduction of 1930s cowardice, a mark of shame, a scarlet letter, that Ann Arbor will have great difficulty removing.

Victor Lieberman, Raoul Wallenberg Distinguished University Professor of History, University of Michigan

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2935 Birch Hollow Drive
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108
(734) 395-4438
www.washtenawjewishnews.org
CKinbergeditor@washtenawjewishnews.org

Editor and Publisher
Clare Kinberg

Advertising Manager
Gordon White

Design and Layout
Dennis Platte

Staff Writers
Lonnie Sussman

Contributing Writers
Marianne Aaron, Yuni Aaron, Rabbi Jared Anstandig, Michael Appel, Leah Berger, Rabbi Robyn Frisch,, Rabbi Nate DeGroot, Eileen Freed, Stephanie Glass, Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Emily Gordon, Joanne B. Jarvi, Kelsey Robinette Keeves, Randy Milgrom, David Nelson, Eileen Pollack, Ali Reingold, Danny Schwartz, Martin Stolzenberg, Jessica Weil

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Militias then, militias now

By Eileen Pollack

I moved from Boston to Ann Arbor in the fall of 1994; not long afterward, Timothy McVeigh blew up the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, killing 168 people. When McVeigh's involvement with something called the Michigan Militia came to light, I wondered whether I had been crazy to leave the relative safety of the East Coast for a state in which right-wing extremists apparently were running around the woods with assault weapons, training for a day when Black people, Jews, homosexuals, and East and West Coast liberals would try to take away their guns and lock them in concentration camps.

As a parent, I was frightened for my Jewish son. But as a writer, I was fascinated by the way Michigan seemed to provide a home not only for all the lefties I had met in Ann Arbor and Detroit, but so many ultra-conservative Christian fundamentalists. How could citizens with such radically conflicting views coexist to form one government?

Then I met a couple who had migrated from northern California to a small, idyllic town in Southeast Michigan, only to find that the minister of the local church was preaching virulently antisemitic sermons. When the husband, who was Jewish, complained to the local newspaper, the couple found themselves ostracized and their children harassed at school. Soon, their house burned down. The fire marshal found evidence of what he believed to be arson, and my friends became convinced their neighbors had burned them out, while the fire marshal decided my friends had burned down their own house to collect the insurance, which, he implied, was what Jewish people did.

Hearing this couple's story, I knew I had a book, and I spent the next few years finding out everything I could learn about right-wing terror groups. I was wary of trying to infiltrate the local unit of the militia, but I found I didn't really need to: the militias were holding meetings at local restaurants, posting newsletters on public websites, training in the nearby woods, and holding their annual Tax Blast in a public park a few miles from Ann Arbor. (The group even provided kosher hot dogs for any Jew who might be interested in joining their cause.)

I finished the novel. But when my agent sent the manuscript around New York, the editors, who didn't see any white supremacists in their neighborhoods, decided I must be making up the characters I was describing. Not until 2008, when Barack Obama's presidency incited right-wing extremists to new spasms of hate and vitriol, did Breaking and Entering find a publisher.

It became my fellow Michiganders' turn to express disbelief. Clearly, I had arrived from the East Coast with a narrowminded view of all Midwesterners as racist, Jew-hating right-wingers, then I had cherry-picked evidence to support this view. Where I saw white supremacists, my fellow Michiganders saw salt-of-the-earth farmers and mechanics, plumbers and electricians who might keep a few hunting rifles around the house and sound off about government interference in their lives, but who, as good-hearted Christians, would be the first to help out a neighbor, be that neighbor Jewish, Black, Muslim, or homosexual.

In fact, I had been careful to show that, even in rural towns, Michiganders came in all varieties. Some of the militia members I had gotten to know feared an environmental crisis, another attack like 9/11, or a breakdown of our fragile web of technological interconnection, and they welcomed anyone who would help them prepare for such catastrophes. Some of the people who complained about Blacks and Jews taking over their country seemed to secretly crave the friendship, even love, of those same Blacks and Jews. But I also knew that some truly dangerous crazies were out there in the woods carrying out maneuvers with truly dangerous weapons, stoked by visions of conspiracies they had read about on the internet. The trouble was, most of us had no way of knowing who was who. And the mutual paranoia building between both groups seemed as dangerous as any actual threat either group otherwise might pose to anyone.

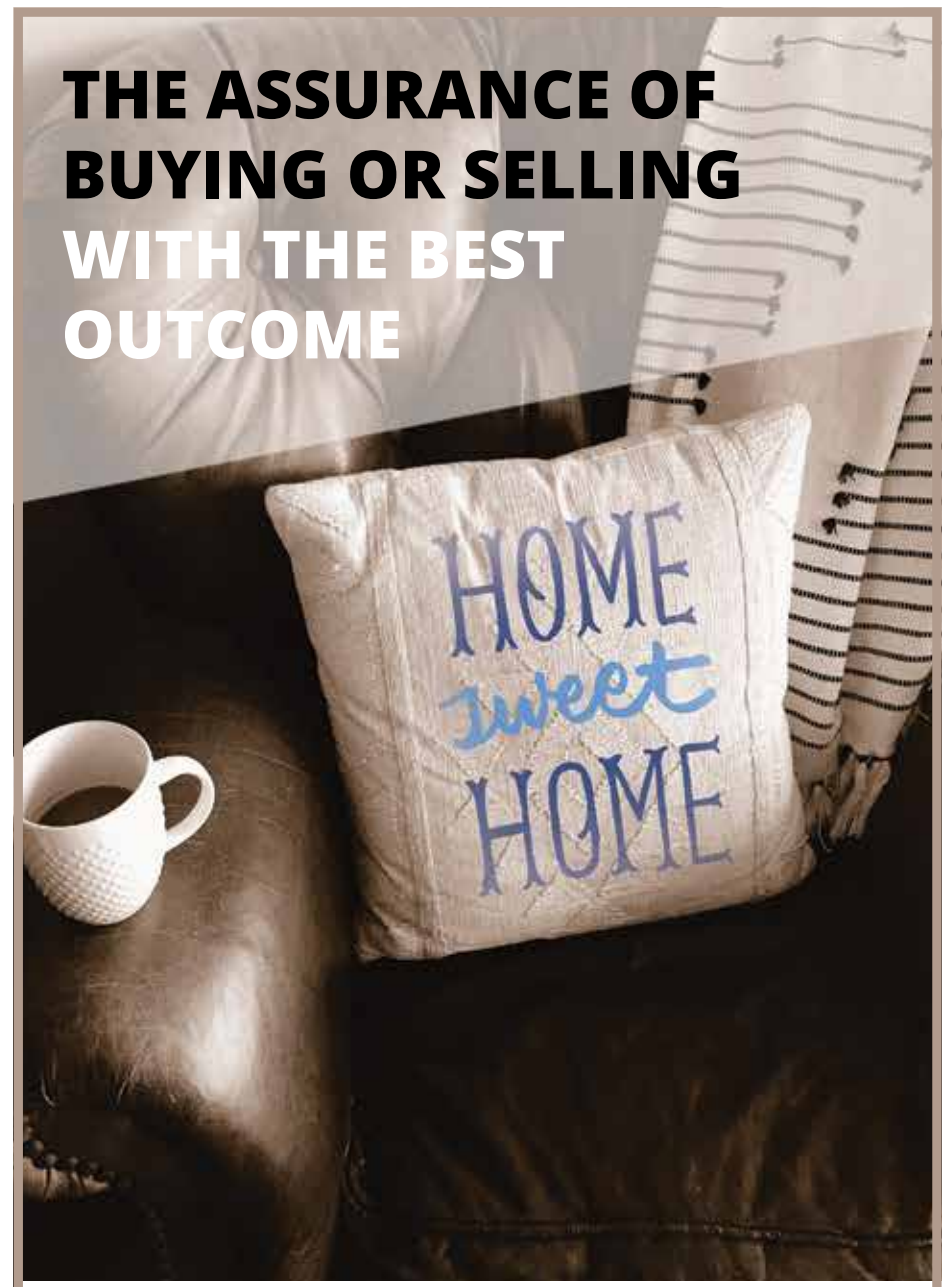
My novel received some attention in the national press, but Obama's second term lulled most of us into believing we all could get along. Every so often, the hatred and paranoia would flare into view, as when a group of revolutionary Christian militants called the Hutaree got arrested near Ann Arbor for planning to kill a police officer and then bomb any government officials who showed up for the funeral.

At times like those, I would get interviewed on the news or asked to write an Op-Ed piece in the Times to testify that such groups actually did exist. (In the case of the Hutaree, the leader's son turned out to have been my son's classmate for four years at Community High, a school whose faculty leaned so far to the left that the former revolutionary Bill Ayers regularly came to lecture there and the students tried their best to carry on the traditions that had earned them the nickname "Commie High.") For the most part, though, everyone ignored right-wing hate groups, and my novel sank out of sight on Amazon.

Now, with white supremacists marching through Charlottesville chanting "Jews will not replace us," with the massacre of 11 Jews in a Pittsburgh synagogue, with thousands of members of online hate groups promulgating age-old theories of Jewish conspiracies to destroy the world, with armed extremists taking over the Michigan State House, with white supremacists infiltrating police departments and gunning down innocent Black people in their cars, their homes, their very beds, and with a teenage vigilante in Kenosha murdering two protestors (both of whom were vilified for their possibly Jewish surnames on online hate sites), you might think I would take satisfaction in having been proven correct.

Except, I wish I had been proven wrong. I never truly believed that the racists, the antisemites, the conspiracy theorists, and the militia nuts would become so bold as to march into the very chambers of our government. I never believed they would find a leader in the Oval Office. I never believed they would be aided and abetted by so many of their supposedly good-hearted white Christian neighbors. I always assumed that the far left and far right would maintain the uneasy peace that prevailed when I moved to Michigan, that the differences between the two groups wouldn't eventually tear the state — and the nation — in two. And I hope I am not being similarly optimistic in believing that we no longer will ignore the ugliness this rift finally has exposed and that we will take some very real and effective steps to cure the infection and heal the wound. ■

Eileen Pollack's most recent novel is The Professor of Immortality; she is the former director of the Helen Zell MFA Program in Creative Writing at the University of Michigan.



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Gabriel Mordoch: Irving M. Hermelin Curator of Judaica

Kelsey Robinette Keeves, special to the WJN

In May of 2019, the University of Michigan installed Gabriel Mordoch as the Irving M. Hermelin Curator of Judaica for the Frankel Center for Judaic Studies. Mordoch, who has served as a cataloger for the U-M library in Judaica and Western European languages since 2017, came to Michigan after receiving his Ph.D. at The Ohio State University's program in studies of the Portuguese-speaking world. His dissertation, "New Christian Discourse and Early Modern Portuguese Oceanic Expansion: The Cases of Garcia da Orta, Fernao Mendes Pinto, Ambrosio Fernandes Brandao, and Pedro de Leon Portocarrero," studies literary texts written by Iberian New Christians in the context of the early modern Portuguese and Spanish oceanic expansion.

Mordoch's library experience is extensive: he has assisted in cataloging, digitizing, and research and reference work at Hebrew University's Oral History Division archives, the National Library of Israel, and The Ohio State University Libraries.

"This enriching work experience sparked my desire to pursue an academic library career," Mordoch commented. "I also must say that interactions with librarians along my way as a student and the support I received from them have had a very positive impact on my academic life. At some point, I realized I wanted to have a positive impact like that on students' academic journeys."

Gabriel Mordoch

Since becoming the Judaica curator, Mordoch has worked to acquire helpful online resource subscriptions such as the film platform *JFLIX*, Brill's *Encyclopedia of Jewish History and Culture Online*, *A Companion to Medieval and Early Modern Confraternities*, the *Kotar Reference Library* of Israeli publishers, and Jewish-German scholar Victor Klemperer's diaries. Additionally, Mordoch has worked to add Jewish language dictionaries, Jewish cookbooks, and newspaper archives, and has expanded the libraries' renowned Irwin M. Alterman Haggadah collection.

"The U-M Library is one of the world's largest academic research libraries. Like other libraries, it is not just a repository of books, but also a physical and virtual space that allows different kinds of interactions, discoveries, and opportunities," observed Mordoch. "One of my favorite things about working in our library is the opportunity to interact with faculty members, students, library colleagues, and the general public, and collaborate with them on different kinds of projects."

Mordoch initially became interested in Sephardic studies because of his desire to research his own family history (one of his grandparents was born and raised in Salonika, Greece). This fall he will be teaching a Judeo-Spanish (Ladino) undergraduate course. "Ladino is the distinctive Jewish language of the Sephardic Jews, like Yiddish is to the Ashkenazic Jews," explained Mordoch. "Besides familiarizing themselves with the language, history, and culture of the Sephardim, students will have the opportunity to learn what constitutes a Jewish language. They will also realize that the formation of any language is a much more fluid process than we usually conceive."

Mordoch is the second incumbent of the Irving M. Hermelin Curator position, replacing Elliot Gertel, who retired in 2019 after 20 years at the University of Michigan. ■

Virtual community breakfast strengthens connection and community

Emily Gordon, special to the WJN

At the start of each fall semester, both Jewish and non-Jewish community members look forward to mixing and mingling at the annual Community Welcome Breakfast hosted by students in the University of Michigan's School of Social Work's Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP). This year, for the first time, due to the pandemic, the event's venue on August 28 was in cyberspace, and the coffee and noshes were bring-your-own. Thoughtful conversation and meaningful connection between participants, however, was as strong as ever.

After welcomes from JCLP director, Karla Goldman, and Lynn Videka, the dean of the School of Social Work, current JCLP students and nine alumni of JCLP and its predecessor programs at U-M who had also joined the Zoom call introduced themselves. Then it was on to breakout rooms, where incoming and returning JCLP students, alumni, community leaders, and neighbors introduced themselves, schmoozed, and posed complex questions relating to this year's theme, reflecting on the impact COVID-19 on individuals, communal institutions, and the Jewish community.

Local leaders from Ann Arbor and Metro Detroit discussed how their respective organizations have responded to community needs during the pandemic, such as providing emergency funding and offering creative programs. Participants discussed lessons drawn from seeing the disparities between members of the community that have emerged during the pandemic, and reflected on which aspects of the current situation might have staying power when the pandemic has passed.

For the seven incoming JCLP students, the event was an exciting first chance to contribute to dynamic conversations and forge new relationships. "The community breakfast was a wonderful opportunity for me to engage with many members of the School of Social Work, Ann Arbor, and Detroit's Jewish communities," says incoming JCLP student Ezra Brown, whose MSW pathway is management and leadership. "Even though it was virtual, the morning was engaging and allowed me to better understand how broad and diverse the Ann Arbor and Metro Detroit Jewish communities are." ■

How to Celebrate Sukkot Without a Sukkah

Rabbi Robyn Frisch, originally for 18doors.com, reprinted with permission

Want to celebrate Sukkot without a sukkah this year? You're not alone.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, some of us who might have been able to visit or even celebrate Sukkot with a meal in a sukkah in regular circumstances, may not be able to this year. The central symbol of the holiday of Sukkot is the sukkah, a temporary hut that is built outside to remind us of the 40 years the Israelites spent wandering in the wilderness, during which they dwelled in sukkahs.

So what can you do if you want to celebrate the holiday of Sukkot but you don't have a sukkah to visit?

Have a picnic—in your backyard. So you can't have a meal in a sukkah. Your backyard (or deck or local park) is still a great place to bring the family and enjoy a meal al fresco. Yes, it's a bummer not to be under the sukkah, but isn't a big part of the holiday cooking seasonal meals and enjoying them outside with loved ones? Even if all the people you'd like to invite to your picnic blanket can't safely join you, this is the time to love the ones you're with. And eating outside on a picnic blanket is fun for the kids, period.

Go stargazing. While Jewish law teaches that the vegetation covering the top of the sukkah needs to be thick enough so that the shade inside the sukkah is greater than the sunlight, we also learn that ideally we should be able to see the stars through the top of the sukkah. Assuming the weather is cooperating, you still have access to gazing at the stars. If you have kids, do this as a family. It can be as simple as going outside and looking up at the sky, and hopefully you'll have the pleasure of seeing some stars.

Help feed and shelter others. In the 19th century the Chasidic Rabbi Hayyim Halberstam of Sandz popularized the practice among his followers of inviting poor people to be guests in their sukkahs. By volunteering at a food bank during Sukkot, we can carry on this wonderful idea of making sure that the less fortunate have food to eat. This year, with the number of unemployed, more people than ever are relying on food banks. Even if they aren't having volunteers pack food because of coronavirus, many food banks still need volunteers to deliver food. Or you could make a donation to a local or national organization that provides food for those in need.

The sukkah, a temporary structure that isn't nearly as sturdy as our homes, also reminds us of how fortunate we are to have a place to live with a roof over our head. Unfortunately, not everyone is so lucky. Sukkot is a great time to explain this to your kids and to volunteer (again, options may be limited due to coronavirus) and/or to give money to a homeless shelter.

Make an edible sukkah. If you can't visit the real thing, why not make a sukkah out of food? A gingerbread house-like activity is popular with kids and adults alike

Harvest. Cook. Eat. In the Bible, Sukkot is one of three harvest festivals (along with Passover and Shavuot) and it was originally considered a thanksgiving for the fall harvest. If you grow your own fruits and vegetables, get picking and cooking, and if not you can go to a farmer's market or farm and buy or pick produce. Then use the local harvest to make yourself delicious meals during the holiday. See some of our favorite recipes for inspiration.

One of the names of Sukkot is Zeman Simchateinu or "season of our joy," so whatever you do to celebrate the holiday, make sure to have fun! ■

Herb Amster on his tenth yahrtzeit

Joanne B. Jarvi, special to the WJN

This October marks the 10-year anniversary of the death of a most gracious and altruistic leader in the Ann Arbor Jewish community and beyond: Herb Amster.

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County was one of Herb's passions. He served on the JFS board and in other capacities for many years. He and a number of other community members were once involved in a JFS committee called the Cool New Things Committee. The Cool, New Things Committee would sit around a table dreaming of what JFS one day might become, realizing that in order to make these dreams a reality, JFS had to learn how to turn their wealth of expertise into real wealth for the organization.

In honor of Herb, and with the help of Norman Herbert, a distinguished advisory council, and generous donors and friends, JFS of Washtenaw County created the eponymous Herb Amster Center, which serves as the agency's social enterprise arm. The purpose of the Herb Amster Center is to identify and create lines of business that will generate revenue for the support and furtherance of JFS's overarching mission: to create solutions, promote dignity, and inspire humanity.

Carol Amster, Herb Amster's wife, says, "We made JFS a place of permanent legacy for my husband Herb, of blessed memory. Everybody who knew Herb knew he loved to take care of people, to make sure everyone was treated with dignity, and that he was committed to making the important mission of JFS sustainable. Fast forward 10 years, the Herb Amster Center created a culture within JFS of extending services to people, organizations, and corporations who can pay in order to provide those same services triple-fold to people who cannot. There were a lot of organizations who wanted me to allow them to use his name for their endeavors, but I knew that JFS was very close to his heart. And it is now a living memorial to him."

What has taken place within JFS — a nonprofit social service agency — since the creation of the Amster Center can be described as nothing less than a massive culture shift.

In 2010, at the time of the Amster Center's creation, JFS had an annual budget was $1 million and reported a total of $1,139 in earned revenue. Nine years later, for the fiscal year 2019, JFS programs produced a revenue of $262,936. The Amster Center Corporate Fee for Service Training clientele continues to grow and includes Ann Arbor Public Schools, Washtenaw County Government Employees and Entities, Community Mental Health, Dykema, Michigan Works, Jiffy/Chelsea Milling Company, Bank of Ann Arbor, and Menlo Innovations. Our THRIVE Clinical Counseling program has made a full transition from 100% grant funded to 100% self-sustained through earned revenue. Beyond the unrestricted revenue, the Center gives JFS the opportunity to employ and empower our clients toward brighter futures through JFSMade, foreign-language interpretation contracts, and transportation jobs.

The earned revenue and opportunities for employment were Herb's dream for the agency. His adage, "Do good, but remember the bottom line so you can do more good," is core to the JFS value system and woven into every department and service.

Herb was one of the founders of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, and along with his wife Carol received from the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor its prestigious Humanitarian Award. An advocate and mentor to many venture capitalists, entrepreneurs, and innovators, Herb was named Michigan Industrialist of the Year in 1987. He was also the second-ever recipient of the Ted Doan Award for Outstanding Leadership in Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the University of Michigan. Herb supported and sat on the boards of many of Washtenaw County's progressive nonprofit organizations, including (but not limited to) the University Musical Society, the Washtenaw Housing Alliance, Arbor Hospice, the NEW Center, and Corner Health Center.

On this anniversary, and every day, we at JFS honor Herb Amster's memory, his entrepreneurial spirit, and his dedication to helping those in need.

Our community is stronger, smarter, and better off in so many ways because of him. ■

JHSM

2021 APPLEBAUM AWARD

Call for Submissions

Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum, circa 1948. (JHSM collections.)

JHSM invites article submissions to *Michigan Jewish History* for consideration for the inaugural **Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum Award**. The award honors outstanding original scholarship in the field of Michigan's Jewish history, broadly defined.

Purpose and Process: This annual award is named for Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum (1922-2001), a JHSM founding member and *Michigan Jewish History*'s first editor, serving from 1960 to 1963. All entries are reviewed and judged by *MJH* editors, the *MJH* advisory committee, and external referees. The winner receives publication in *MJH*, a cash prize of $2,000, $150 worth of JHSM books, special recognition at JHSM's fall awards ceremony, and a complimentary JHSM annual membership. Finalists also may be invited to publish in *MJH*.

Eligibility: Graduate students, faculty members, public historians, and independent scholars are encouraged to submit manuscripts for the Applebaum Award on any topic appropriate to the aims of *MJH*. Double-spaced manuscripts should not exceed 10,000 words, excluding notes, tables, and figures. Chicago-style notes should not exceed 5,000 words.

Submission: Please email a Word version of the complete manuscript to Tracy Weissman, *MJH* managing editor: tweissman@michjewishhistory.org. **Please write "Applebaum Award" in your email's subject line.** Submissions received by close of business on **November 30, 2020**, will be considered for the 2021 award cycle.

About: *Michigan Jewish History*, a peer-reviewed academic journal, is published annually by JHSM.

Michigan Jewish history journal wins state history award

Special to the WJN

The Historical Society of Michigan (JHSM) announced its 2020 state history award winners on Tuesday. Among the honorees is Jewish Historical Society of Michigan's annual scholarly journal, *Michigan Jewish History* (MJH), which won in the Outstanding Printed Periodical category. It will be recognized along with the other winners at a virtual awards ceremony at 7 p.m. on Friday, October 2, as part of the HSM's annual Michigan History Conference.

Michigan Jewish History celebrates its 60th anniversary this year. In continuous publication since 1960, it is among the oldest periodicals devoted to American Jewish history. In honor of this milestone, JHSM's editors and advisory committee undertook sweeping changes to make the journal more useful for scholars, students, and the general public.

When JHSM was established in June 1959, its founders pledged to "publish . . . periodicals for the purpose of recording and interpreting the life of Michigan Jewry." MJH's inaugural March 1960 issue was modest: 37 types pages, distributed to fewer than 50 members. (The 2020 issue, nearly five times its length, has a print run of 1,000 and is a staple in libraries across the United States and Israel.) Despite the small circulation in 1960, the journal's aims were monumental: to "advance a discipline [i.e., American Jewish history] whose cultural value . . . is potentially incalculable."

The 2020 issue marks a return to those high-minded ideals. JHSM President Risha B. Ring says, "We aim to produce knowledge, share it with the world, and, through those actions, make a difference. In this issue, readers will learn about Jewish cookbooks, Detroit's Industrial Removal Office, and engineer Julius Kahn's reinforced concrete technologies."

New for 2020, MJH articles are now subjected to peer review, a process in which leading academics appraise manuscripts and offer suggestions for improvement. JHSM Executive Director and MJH editor Catherine Cangany, notes, "The result is stronger, more impactful scholarship. To encourage submissions like these, we also have created the Rabbi Emanuel Applebaum Award, a $2000 best article prize."

The new MJH also includes primary sources and lesson plans for history and religious educators. The 2020 issue features a unit on a controversy over Michigan's first and forgotten Jewish cemetery, located on what is now the Diag at the University of Michigan.

Cangany says, "MJH isn't 'history for history's sake.' Thinking critically about the past helps us understand the present, so we can change the future — for ourselves and those who come after us." ■

For more information, contact Catherine Cangany at ccangany@michjewishhistory.org or 248-915-1848

Habonim Dror alumnae show up for this year's "Tavor Musicale"

Leah Berger, special to the WJN

Don't you ask me/what I'm thinking/If I make you happy/I will keep on singing/ for I sing when I can't talk/and I dance when I can't walk/and I'm going back to Splendor Bridge/gonna try to call it home. — Sam Flesher, Splendor Bridge, 1961.

These were the opening lines of the grand finale music video in an online fundraiser for Habonim Dror Camp Tavor, of Three Rivers, Michigan. Moderated by live emcees, the prerecorded skits and musical numbers highlighted seven decades of Tavor's historical and cultural creativity in just under two hours. During the COVID-19 pandemic, with camp activities shifted to online programming and an inevitable decrease in funding looming, Tavor alum Michelle Azar took it upon herself to organize the concert. She knew it was important to have a meaningful denouement to the show.

"We all need to be moved, positively, especially during these times," says Azar, whose background includes 10 years as the founder and producer of a theater company in Los Angeles.

Written, arranged, and produced entirely by Tavor alumni, the closing video bears testimony to the rich talent emerging from the lush 62-acre property over the past 65 years. Spanning generations and landscapes, the performance features 14 Tavor participants from coast to coast.

"If a person knew nothing about camp and saw people in their sixties and twenties singing the same song with the same passion, that's pretty remarkable," says Marc Morgan, video producer/editor.

I've been wanderin' 20 centuries or more/ but I know where I am going to/ and what I'm going for/I am walking down that track/evening sun is at my back . . . .

A prolific bard with universal appeal, Flesher penned hundreds of songs until his passing in 2010.

"Splendor Bridge is one of those songs, like Blowing in the Wind, that you can get behind," says Detroit native David Tobocman, the video's musical arranger. "It's simple in construction but deep in meaning, the perfect song for a camp that is much more than swimming and marshmallow roasts."

Since 1956, the unique combination of Jewish cultural experience, progressive Jewish values, and natural idealism of a camp modeled after Israeli kibbutz life keeps campers returning year after year.

I once had two loves/ deep within my heart/Now I have but one love/we're ten thousand miles apart/And she's beckoning to me/from far across the sea . . . .

Israeli pop songs or folk music from the 1970s emanating from the loudspeaker before the morning wake up call, a counselor strumming lullabies on guitar before sleep, Friday night quiet melodies on Shabbat Hill, and rousing late night Israeli Folk Dancing — these are familiar Tavor scenes year after year.

Hebrew and English songs are taught daily, so that even if you are a new camper, you will know the traditional camp songs by the end of the summer.

"Tavor made singing in a group a big part of my life," says Dana Zuckerman. "Sitting next to others made me feel free to belt out songs with all I've got."

How many times will the sun set/on the sea by Splendor Bridge, before we can share it from a window on the ridge/ and I'll count each lonely day/ until I'm on my way . . . .

Music is the nexus around which the Tavor day spins. But the ruach — the spirit of the songs — proves just as important.

"Singing could be attached to social justice values, with labor, or antiwar songs," says Ari Lutze-Jahriel, camp counselor 2017/2019. "As I came into my own political experience, Tavor had a lot to do with it."

A part of a largely youth-led movement, Habonim Dror campers are empowered to express themselves. Music, dance, and creativity infuse an environment in which campers feel safe to speak up.

"How we celebrated Shabbat and Tisha b'Av was a different way of creating ritual and community that I did not have in the suburbs of Chicago growing up," says Becky Gordon. "I visited two years ago, and we had impromptu discussions with the kids about gender identity — it was so fantastic."

And I'm going back to Splendor Bridge/gonna try and call it home.

While the song's title is a clear tribute to Kibbutz Gesher Haziv (Splendor Bridge in Hebrew), the understanding of kibbutz life and the complexities of the state of Israel are different now than in 1961. Campers explore their connection to Israel in thoughtful ways, but it is also clear that Tavor is its own "splendor bridge." With images from more than 50 years, the video pulls on the heartstrings of those who have come to call Tavor home.

"To this day and every time I go and visit, it is home," says Morgan, emotion reverberating through his words.

The song's melancholy feel of longing and yearning is even more poignant than ever. This year's online campers hope to call Tavor home in the summers to come.

The video of Splendor Bridge with full Tavor Musicale can be found on the Camp Tavor website at www.camptavor.org. Fundraiser proceeds offset the summer's lost revenue and fund the camp's scholarship program, ensuring the future of Camp Tavor.

Camp Tavor welcomes kids entering second through 12th grade with programs from one week to a full summer. For more information or to make a donation, go to www.camptavor.org. ■

MEET THE TAVOR MUSICALE FUNDRAISER PERFORMERS
David Berger is a drummer from Saint Louis, Missouri, who spent the summers at Tavor from 1981-1985.
He studied music at the New School for Jazz and Contemporary Music, located in NYC's Greenwich Village. Then focused on early American music, specifically the functional & spiritual music of New Orleans and relocated to the University of New Orleans to study all facets of improvisational musical, formally known as Jazz.
He returned to New York City in early 1993 and joined the eclectic houseboat band The Flying Neutrinos for a 7-year stint which generated multiple recordings, national & international tours, film, and television appearances.
JOIN DAVID! DREAMING & SINGING AUGUST 9TH @ 4 PM EST
Register at https://bit.ly/3gZJYSM or look for the link in bio

giraffe
DESIGN BUILD
Join us on a virtual tour for the BRAG Ann Arbor Fall Showcase of Homes, October 16th -18th. Tour information can be found on BRAG website: http://www.bragannarbor.net/showcase-of-new-and-remodeled-homes.
Visit us online & follow us on Instagram for additional updates. @giraffedesignbuild
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Rep Andy Levin media briefing with J Street

Michael Appel, special to the WJN

In both Israel and the United States, political headlines throughout the past summer vacillated between COVID-19, annexation, and then recognition between Israel and the UAE. It appears now that in both countries the governments' responses to the pandemic will have the most salient political impact. But for a number of weeks in mid-summer, political positioning over Israel's apparent plan to implement unilateral annexation of portions of the West Bank dominated the politics of Israel-US relations.

These issues were the immediate context for a media briefing organized by J Street on August 18 featuring a discussion between Representative Andy Levin (D-MI) and Jeremy Ben Ami, J Street's President, about "The Democrats' Evolving Israel Politics and Policies." J Street emerged in 2008 using the catchphrase "pro-Israel, pro-peace" to describe itself and its supporters, and has often been contrasted with AIPAC in its willingness to advocate for positions in opposition to those of the Israeli government. Andy Levin was elected in 2018 to represent Michigan's 9th Congressional District. Levin's stated positions regarding Israel and Palestine are consistent with JStreet's, which has endorsed him through JStreetPAC.

In his introduction, Ben Ami pointed to the increasing number of Democratic lawmakers who embrace JStreet's vision for the United States to actively promote a two-state solution and to assure that United States financial aid to Israel is not used to further annexation. Ben Ami pointed to the near unanimity among Democratic candidates in support of these positions as "a changing of the guard over the last decade, and no one represents this better than Andy Levin."

Levin opened his remarks by referring back to an interfaith trip he took as a graduate student to Israel and Palestine in 1990. He came back and said, "We need a two-state solution really fast, a Jewish and democratic Israel is really not possible in the long term without it . . . and to be honest the reception at home in the Jewish community to this idea wasn't that friendly."

In contrast, Levin described the Democratic caucus in Congress today as having overwhelming agreement on three things: support for Israel's existence, support for Israel's security, and support for Palestinian political and human rights.

Jeremy Ben Ami

Andy Levin

Levin summed up his experience of this shift. "I'm the same Jewish kid, I'm just now in Congress. And I've got a lot of Christian and Muslim and Jewish colleagues in Congress in the Democratic party who feel just as I do."

As further evidence of this shift, Levin and Ben Ami pointed to the 2020 Democratic platform's direct opposition to annexation and to settlement expansion (new to the platform from 2016), along with a restatement of the party's longstanding commitment to Israel's existence as a Jewish and democratic state and to its security needs.

The briefing then opened to questions. Rachel Oswald, with the *Congressional Quarterly*, asked about the effect of changes in leadership in the Democratic caucus, citing the departures of Eliot Engel and Nita Lowey in particular. "Different voices are going to come to the fore," Levin responded. "Things will continue to move towards the center of gravity that we're talking about on this call. I feel very clear about it."

Ishaan Tharoor, a *Washington Post* columnist, then asked a question — echoing some progressive voices within the Democratic party — about a growing tendency to separate Palestinian civil rights from political rights and downplay the relevance of a two-state solution. Levin responded by agreeing that "no one's human rights should be tethered to statehood," but continued, "I'm not ready to talk about Palestinian political rights outside of a state. We need a Palestinian state; they need one, they have a right to one."

A number of questions were asked of Levin and Ben Ami about the importance of Democrats calling for restrictions to United States aid to Israel, specifically that none be used to support or further annexation. "No country wants to have any part of its activities and actions actually scrutinized," Ben Ami responded. "These kinds of restrictions are a common tool. The State of Israel is the sole recipient of assistance of this kind that doesn't have any restrictions placed on them . . . and it's really a proposal to bring American assistance to Israel in line with its assistance to the rest of the world."

Two final questions from Emily Tamkin of the *New Statesman*, and Akbar Ahmed, of *HuffPost* asked the speakers to discuss the realities of de facto annexation, even as Israel announced a postponement of plans for de jure annexation just days before the briefing. Levin responded: "We're on 53 years here. And my kids are like, 'occupation?' To them it's forever. They are skeptical. A lot of young people feel that an occupation that goes on decade after decade after decade — at some point, what's the difference? And so I feel a tremendous sense of urgency. . . . It's not just about stopping annexation, it's about creating a Palestinian state that's viable next to Israel."

As if to highlight the final questions in the briefing, a J Street email appeal that went out the next day, August 19, quoted Likud MK and current Minister of Health Yuli Edelstein's response to the delayed annexation vote: "Soon the day will come when we will officially apply Israeli law to Samaria. In the meantime, we are applying sovereignty on the ground. . . . We will annex through deeds, not with words." ■

Plaintiffs file appeal for reconsideration in Ann Arbor protester case

Danny Schwartz, originally for the Detroit Jewish News, updated by WJN

A motion for a district judge to reconsider their ruling against Ann Arbor synagogue congregants in a case involving anti-Israel synagogue protesters has been denied, the plaintiffs' counsel said. Plaintiffs' counsel, Marc Susselman, says an appeal has been filed. The Court will be issuing a briefing schedule in the near future. Briefs will not be due until sometime in November or December, 2020. After all briefs have been filed, the Court may schedule an oral argument, to take place sometime in January or February, 2021. A decision from the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals is not expected until late winter, or early spring, in 2021.

U.S. District Judge Victoria Roberts dismissed the lawsuit brought by a congregant against the protesters on Aug. 19, on the grounds that the plaintiffs did not prove they suffered concrete injury as a result of the protests. In response, the plaintiff's counsel filed a motion for reconsideration on Thursday, Aug. 27.

The motion stated that the court's decision "contains several palpable defects, including errors of fact and law," including one believed defect described as a mischaracterization of the equitable relief being sought by the plaintiffs.

"Plaintiffs … ask the Court to enjoin these Defendants from engaging in peaceful political speech in public areas. The Constitution simply does not tolerate such restraint," the original court decision reads.

One of the antisemitic signs used by a protester outside of Beth Isreal

PHOTO CREDIT ALEX SHERMAN

"By using the plural, 'public areas,' the statement suggests that Plaintiffs were seeking to bar the Defendants from engaging in their anti-Israel and anti-Semitic speech in every possible public area," the motion responded. "This is not true… Plaintiffs were only seeking reasonable time, place and manner restrictions on the Defendants use of their anti-Israel and anti-Semitic speech in proximity to their house of worship."

Susselman is handling the case along with The Lawfare Project, a New York-based legal fund with a focus on Jewish and pro-Israel cases.

"I expect [Judge Roberts] to deny [the motion], just judging from her reasoning and her attitude demonstrated in her order to dismiss the case," Susselman predicted before the decision. "But she may be concerned about that, because I think we've made very strong arguments that her decision is contrary to so many precedents on so many levels that she's clearly risking it being overturned, and no judge wants to be overturned."

Ann Arbor resident Henry Herskovitz, leader and founder of a group called Witness for Peace, began protesting outside of the synagogue in 2003. The group has protested there every Saturday morning since then, timed to the congregation's Shabbat services. The protesters have held signs with messages including "Jewish Power Corrupts" and "Resist Jewish Power." Some supporters have exhibited sympathies with neo-Nazis and other antisemitic groups.

The December 2019 lawsuit was filed by Marvin Gerber, a Beth Israel member. Dr. Miriam Brysk, a Holocaust survivor and member of Pardes Hannah Congregation, which is located in an annex next to Beth Israel, is a part of the lawsuit as a co-plaintiff.

The suit argued that the protesters violated several federal statutes which make it unlawful for private citizens to engage in conduct, including speech, which targets particular individuals based on their race or ethnicity.

The suit separately alleges that the City of Ann Arbor aided and abetted the protesters by failing to enforce the prohibitions in its sign ordinance.

Herskovitz and his fellow protesters later filed a motion to dismiss the case, which led to the initial dismissal ■

Looking for Rose: Muskogee, Oklahoma

Clare Kinberg, 10th installment in a series

This is a story about my aunt Rose and her husband Zebedee Arnwine. Before they met and before they moved together to a rural town in Southwest Michigan, they'd lived for more than 30 years in their separate communities — she in St Louis, Missouri, with immigrant Jewish parents, and he in a family of Black farmers in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Though I never met Aunt Rose, I knew five of her siblings quite well, among them my father. Writing my aunt's life is an inward-facing process: though a generation distant, her background is my own. I can hear her sisters' voices, my father's inflections. I listen for echoes within to imagine Aunt Rose.

To write Mr. Arnwine's life, I search directories, public legal documents and census records. These shards of his life have led me to buried scenes of Oklahoma history — American history. Though deep in the archives, this history that shaped the lives of my aunt and her husband also shapes my own 21st Century life. My 19-year-old daughter came into my bedroom two nights ago to tell me about a TikTok she'd just viewed of a white supremacist angrily ranting about an all-Black town somewhere in the South. "I want to go live there," she said. She didn't know I was writing, just then, about all-Black towns in Oklahoma three generations ago.

My aunt's husband, Zebedee Arnwine, was born 100 years before my daughters, in 1902 in Cherokee County, East Texas. Soon after his birth, Zebedee's parents moved their family 300 miles straight north to Indian Territory, to what would become, in 1907, the state of Oklahoma.

The Arnwine family's move to the area near Muskogee, Oklahoma was part of a large migration of Black farmers, a wave that came a generation after the Exodusters of 1877, yet two decades before the Great Migration to the North. This relocation included thousands of families who organized all-Black towns in a part of the Indian Territory where some were advocating for an all-Black state. They were dreaming of a place where Black people could live free from ever present degradations and violence.

At the same time that some were imagining an all-Black state in the Indian Territory, the United States Federal Government adopted bureaucratic, legal mechanisms to allot Native American tribal lands to individuals who could be proven to be members of the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee, Cherokee, or Seminole tribes. In 1887, the Dawes Act had authorized the United States President to subdivide communal tribal lands into individual allotments. Nine years later, in 1898, the Curtis Amendment to the Dawes Act abolished tribal governments and assigned the Dawes Commission the responsibility of determining each individual's tribal membership. The racial and economic struggles in the Indian Territory during those years were unique, in part because the Black slaves of some of the tribes, freed by the Civil War, were also considered tribal members, and could be included in the allotments. Known as the "Creek Freedmen" the people enslaved by members of the Creek tribe, and their descendants, had complicated relationships with African Americans arriving from other parts of the South.

In Acres of Aspiration: The All-Black Towns of Oklahoma, Hannibal B. Johnson explains, "Beyond the natural yearning for freedom, many Blacks held firm to a perceived economic truth: land ownership held the key to success. Moreover, they thought land ownership would lead inexorably to full citizenship. . . . In trickles, then in torrents, Blacks streamed first into Kansas, then increasingly into Oklahoma. This bold swim upstream by Black pioneers sparked controversy, then fear and resentment, among local whites. This decidedly mixed reception failed to stem the tide of migrants. The floodgates having parted, a cascade of newcomers spilled across the region. Oklahoma, some thought, would evolve into an all-Black state captained by a Black governor. All-Black towns and settlements in the windswept Oklahoma plains captured the collective imagination of an entire people."

Zebedee Arnwine was perhaps five years old when the Indian and Oklahoma Territories became the state of Oklahoma and adopted a Jim Crow constitution. The new state's constitution defined "White race" as everyone except anyone who was of African descent and then went on to establish segregated schools and empowered the legislature to limit the voting rights of Blacks. The first bill to come before the new Oklahoma senate established into law the segregation of Blacks in public transportation and public facilities.

Zebedee was working as a farmer with his father when on April 2, 1917, President Woodrow Wilson, declared the United States was sending troops to Europe to fight what would become World War I because "The world must be made safe for democracy." About a year later, 16-year-old Zebedee, claiming he was 18, briefly married and registered for the draft. He was one of the several hundred thousand Black men who registered but were not called up. I have found no record of the dissolution this first early marriage.

Tamah, the woman who became Zebedee's second wife, was born in 1901 to Rebecca Walker, an enrolled Creek Freedman. Still, Rebecca was required to go in person and with a witness before the Dawes Commission in Muskogee, Oklahoma, to enroll three-year-old Tamah into the tribe. A transcript of the Dawes commission's interview before a panel of white men is preserved in the Oklahoma archives. Enrolling her young daughter into the tribe meant Tamah would be entitled to an allotment of land in the Muskogee area, in Indian Territory. There was oil and gas under that land.

When Tamah was a teenager her land was leased to an oil and gas company that sent her a monthly check. However, as was common at the time, a white "guardian" was established by the court. The Muskogee Cimiter, a local Black newspaper, found more than 3,000 similar guardianship cases, showing that $100 million had been stolen from Native American and Black families. In Tamah's case, her appointed guardian was evidently temporary, and he spent a good deal of court time in an effort to become a permanent "guardian" by proving Tamah's incompetence to manage her estate. These court proceedings, too, are preserved in the Oklahoma Historical Library. After three years of legal wrangling, Tamah, when she turned 18, won the right to manage her own affairs. Not long after, she married Zeb Arnwine, and in 1924 Tamah and Zebedee had a daughter they named Rebecca.

It was during this marriage that the Black community of Greenwood, not an hour away from Muskogee, was attacked by a white mob, killing dozens if not hundreds, burning several square blocks, and leaving 10,000 Black people homeless.

Greenwood had been a prosperous Black city within the city of Tulsa with its own thriving economy, professionals, shops, and banks. Tulsa was considered the oil capital of the world, and Greenwood the Black Wall Street.

One eyewitness account of the coordinated destruction of Greenwood was recorded by the attorney Buck Colbert Franklin in his autobiography, edited by his son and grandson, the historians John Hope and John Whittington Franklin. On the evening of May 31, 1921, Buck Franklin got wind of impending violence, and because he knew so many of the city's leaders, white and Black, he thought he could do something to prevent it:

> *I tried to reach [the sheriff's office] but was unsuccessful, and I learned that the [phone] wires were cut. At daybreak [June 1, 1921] I went to my office still believing I could get to the sheriff's office. But I saw I was too late. Hundreds of men with drawn guns were approaching from every direction. . . . I stood at the steps to my office, and I was immediately arrested and taken to one of the many detention camps. Even then, airplanes were circling overhead, dropping explosives upon the buildings that had been looted, and big trucks were hauling all sorts of furniture and household goods away. In these camps I saw pregnant women, and one was so heavy that a doctor was called in to deliver her baby. Soon I was back upon the streets, but the building where I had my office was a smoldering ruin, and all my lawbooks and office fixtures had been consumed by flames. I went to where my rooming house had stood a few short hours before, but it was in ashes, with all my clothes and the money to be used in moving my family. As far as one could see, not a Negro dwelling house or place of business stood.*

Buck Franklin describes the trigger to the Tulsa massacre as an accusation against a teenage son of a well-known and respected Greenwood businessman. "The boy was on his job [as a shoe-shiner and janitor] and, boarding a very crowded elevator, he accidentally stepped on the lady's foot. She became angry and slapped him, and a fresh, cub newspaper reporter, without any experience and no doubt anxious for a byline, gave out an erroneous report that a Negro had assaulted a white girl."

This familiar yet false cross-racial accusation compounded generational trauma still felt in 2018 when Charles Blow, a New York Times opinion writer, interviewed 103-year-old Olivia J. Hooker, another eyewitness to the Tulsa massacre. Hooker's father owned an upscale department store in 1921, and the family lived in a comfortable five room home. "White men broke into their house as Hooker and some of her siblings hid beneath an oak dining table, draped with a tablecloth. 'They took a hatchet to my sisters' piano. They poured oil all over my grandmother's bed. They stuffed the dresser with ammunition,' Hooker told me. . . . They broke the phonograph and the Enrico Caruso records her mother had received as a gift from a friend who had gone to study in Heidelberg, Germany."

I can only imagine the effects of this racist violence on young Zebedee Arnwine. I have been witness, though, to my daughters' emerging identities as young Black women, their self-love and their self-doubts, their righteous anger, their rising independence, their bold confrontations with risk, all of these developing amid looping replays of white police beating, strangling, and shooting Black men and women. My daughters share with me their feelings of anger and vulnerability; because I am white, I know I don't fully feel what they are experiencing. Yet, when there was a shooting in a synagogue in Poway, California and when a rabbi's houseguests were attacked with a machete in Monsey, New York, my daughters were the first to check in with me.

Racial segregation and racially based injustice impact my integrated family's life every day. Our ears are attuned to danger; violence imprinted in our cells, accompanying us, through the generations, on all our journeys. ■

Silver linings in the time of COVID-19

Ali Reingold, special to the WJN

Magnetic nametags affixed to lockers line the hallways where colorful billboards display smiling photographs of Hebrew Day School teachers. Meticulously placed desks with fresh folders, writing journals, math manipulatives, and art supplies occupy classroom spaces. The walls are supplemental teachers, displaying signs explaining the HDS Mensch code of conduct and the proper method for washing hands.

And the sounds of laughing, happy, mask-wearing children fill the air.

On August 31, Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor opened for in-person instruction for the 2020-2021 school year, bringing with it all that families have come to expect from this school in a typical year — a deep commitment to providing excellent academic instruction in general studies, Judaic studies, and Hebrew; a warm and welcoming environment; a community; a family.

However, this year is, and the road to reopening was, anything but typical.

It started with a task force

Led by Head of School Jennifer Rosenberg and composed of teachers and administrators, the HDS Safe Reopening Task Force began its journey in June. Meeting frequently throughout the summer, the group's data-driven, safety-first approach left no stone unturned. Incorporating guidance from the state of Michigan and the CDC in consultation with myriad local experts in the fields of medicine, public health, and psychology, the educators became the students, expanding their vocabulary to include terms such as "risk mitigation" and "viral load." They learned to ask new questions and to integrate their own expertise — the education of children — with their newly acquired knowledge. They learned that the task before them was daunting, the data and protocols at times overwhelming, and the territory uncharted. And they learned that their passion for their profession, their dedication to the students and families who hoped to walk through the school's doors in the fall, and their commitment to navigating this new path would help them overcome the challenges of their charge and emerge with a plan.

In July, a 12-page roadmap to reopening was sent to parents and staff. With that document's release, HDS moved into a new phase — implementation. Teachers revised lesson plans to stay true to both the school's educational philosophy and social distancing protocols. Indoor classrooms were completely redesigned while outdoor classrooms were created from scratch. Everything was rethought, and health and wellness became the theme for the year. Teachers were now tasked with not only teaching math and English and science and Hebrew and Judaic Studies, but also how to wear a mask properly, how to transition between activities safely with appropriate distance, and how to teach their students to take care of themselves and each other. An already agile group of professionals, the teachers learned that their flexibility seemed to know no bounds.

But there were still questions. How would the students feel about the new protocols? Would they accept the new norms? Would they have the stamina to make it through a full day masked? Would they long for the days before COVID-19 and be distracted by the protocols now required?

The teachers learned one more important lesson

The power of adaptability. The kids came back to school. Smiling with their eyes, these masked, joyful children followed the rules and learned to accept the new norms. They washed their hands and stayed at a safe distance. They learned math and English and science and Hebrew and Judaic Studies, and they returned, in person, to their home away from home — Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor. ■

For more information about HDS, please contact Ali Reingold, director of admissions, at admissions@hdsaa.org.

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JYP welcomes new board with community celebration

Jessica Weil, special to the WJN

On August 30, Jewish Young Professionals of Ann Arbor hosted a celebration of all the achievements of the past year, honoring the 2020-2021 board, and previewing what's to come.

This past year, JYP had many accomplishments. JYP had over 130 young adults attend over 30 programs. Members of JYP have come from all over the country and world! When they come to the Ann Arbor area, they are looking to find a sense of community. When someone new comes to an event, JYP members strive to make sure that person feels like they belong.

For its programs, JYP partnered with a number of community organizations, including jUnion, Chabad, Michigan Hillel, Beth Israel Congregation, Temple Beth Emeth, and Repair the World Detroit. By working with different organizations in Ann Arbor and Detroit, JYP has been able to create new experiences for JYP members. Whether the partnerships involved religious educators, social workers, or graduate students, the programs added significant value to members.

At the event, the incoming board was formally installed.

The 2020-2021 JYP Board of Directors are:
Joelle Abramowitz, President
Reva Berman Pozolo, Campaign Chair
Julie Cohen, Programming Team Co-Chair
Sheira Cohen, Communications Chair
Rachel Dawson-Baglien, Programming Team Co-Chair
Evan Frenklak, Member at Large
Liana Grey, Interest Groups Co-Chair
Rob Stern, Member at Large

Following the installation, incoming President Joelle Abramowitz spoke to participants about her Jewish journey to her new position in JYP. Building on her experiences to look ahead to the coming year, she said, "I hope JYP can provide a place for our young adult community members to feel welcome and to thrive, whether it is an opportunity to meet new people and make new friends, an opportunity to learn or try something new, or empowering our community members to create the sorts of programs and community that they want to see. I look forward this coming year to promoting Jewish community and leadership that is both empowered and empowering." Her knowledge and experience of leading young adults excited the audience about JYP this coming year.

The event concluded with a champagne toast, desserts and socializing. JYP is looking forward to the year ahead!

Interested in getting involved with JYP? Contact Jessica Weil at jessica@jewishannarbor.org. To learn more, like Jewish Young Professionals of Ann Arbor on Facebook and follow us on Instagram or visit us at jewishannarbor.org/jewish-young-professionals. ■

Continued from page 1, Power of the collective: A source of strength, resolve and renewal

with JFNA and all other Federations — stands ready to continue to address the needs of our community.

Supporting health and safety

Our local organizations and congregations continue to be thoughtful, creative, and diligent in determining when and how to safely open — or to offer programming in new and innovative ways. Jewish Community Center staff worked tirelessly to develop and implement COVID-19 safety guidelines, policies and procedures, and — with money from the COVID Emergency Fund — necessary infrastructure improvements. The JCC was thus able to open the Early Childhood Center and Camp Raanana, providing safe, supervised summer activities for children and respite for working families. Resources from the COVID Emergency Fund have also been used for technology and personal protective equipment, enabling Hebrew Day School to offer in-school instruction and our congregations to provide meaningful programming and support to congregants.

Although we have not had many opportunities to gather, we know that non-COVID-related safety risks continue to grow as well. The Community Security Fund we initiated last year has provided support for facility upgrades and security guards at local Jewish facilities, and we secured U.S. Department of Homeland Security Nonprofit Security Grants — a federal program established with JFNA leadership — in excess of $113,000. These funds will enable Chabad of Ann Arbor and Temple Beth Emeth to upgrade their physical infrastructure to improve security and safety in a manner recommended by the Secure Communities Network and local law enforcement.

It will take all of us to continue to work together to develop new ways to support our community as we plan to send our children back to school and to restore the essential elements of Jewish life.

Addressing increased need

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused significant economic distress, and we are facing the possibility of a serious and prolonged economic downturn. Tremendous demands have been placed on our premier social service agency, Jewish Family Services (JFS), which provides food, mental and physical healthcare, and vocational support. Philanthropists and the government have helped, but real needs continue to grow.

JFNA has recently partnered with major philanthropists to establish the Human Services Matching Fund to help Jewish Federations increase funding to support Jews in need through local human services agencies and programs. Our community will be eligible for up to $60,000 in matching funds if we raise $120,000 in new and increased donations for social services provided by JFS and other programs providing care and support to our most vulnerable.

Providing innovative engagement

We are all looking forward to the time when we can gather safely. At the same time, we have learned that we can bring our community members quality content, include people in our meetings and discussions who cannot be physically present, and gather globally in powerful ways.

There have been many creative outreach efforts these past few months, including Federation's Annual Meeting by Zoom, with a keynote address by Eric Fingerhut, president and CEO of JFNA; a Giving Tuesday celebration of unity highlighting the work of our local organizations and congregations; ongoing Zoom calls with members of our Israeli partner community in Nahalal on a range of topics; a presentation on the tax ramifications of the CARES Act by top planned giving experts; and a Donor Appreciation Event with Chef Michael Solomonov, a collaboration with 32 other Federations. Our Jewish Young Professionals have continued to offer quality programming online and in small groups held in accordance with state guidelines. We are committed to utilizing all available resources to deepen our connections with one another and with the global Jewish community even as we remain physically distant.

Driving long-term planning

Community planning was a priority even before the onset of COVID-19. This crisis has brought into stark relief the necessity of developing a vision for our Jewish community — and for a strong, collaborative, and innovative future.

JFNA is utilizing scenario planning to help Federations — including ours — to navigate the challenges and opportunities presented by an uncertain world. In the coming months we will be exploring this process to address near- and longer-term communal needs while we also begin an all-encompassing visioning and planning process to set the direction — as a community — for a vibrant, welcoming, caring, inclusive, secure, and sustainable Jewish community in Washtenaw County.

"COVID-19 is a new challenge," wrote JFNA Board of Trustees Chair Mark Wilf and Eric Fingerhut in a July Jerusalem Post article, "and it continues to unfold in unexpected ways. But it is the values we have carried with us for generations that enable us to respond effectively: the power of collective action, the necessity of collaboration, and the responsibility to care for the entire community. That's why we know that if we continue to act decisively, we can move from a season of pain to a season of rebuilding and renewal."

As we sit in our sukkot — perhaps with fewer in-person guests than in the past — we encourage you to consider all that you value in our community, and how we might work together to meet our challenges and to strengthen and sustain our vital Jewish infrastructure for decades to come.

Chag Sameach, from both of us. ■

Randy Milgrom is the Board President, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. Eileen Freed is the Executive Director, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor.

Federation awards reopening grants

Stephanie Glass, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is pleased to announce that four local organizations, the Jewish Community Center, Hebrew Day School, Beth Israel Congregation, and Temple Beth Emeth have received grants of up to $15,000 to assist with reopening needs. The Federation's Community Emergency Fund provided the funding. Established in March and seeded with $75,000 in Federation reserves, the Community Emergency Fund is a proactive and ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To date, it has raised $153,000 and provided over $80,000 to local organizations and individuals.

In June, Washtenaw County moved into Phase 4 of the Michigan Safe Start Plan, which allowed businesses, camps, and child care centers to reopen under specific new safety measures, including providing personal protective equipment (PPE) to employees, increased cleanings, and adjustments to building layouts. In response to these and other requirements, Federation established an ongoing grant to help greater Ann Arbor's Jewish institutions prepare for the unique needs brought forth by resuming aspects of in-person and virtual operations. Organizations are able to apply for funding to help with a variety of reopening needs, including purchasing of PPE, cleaning services, and technology for continuing operations remotely.

The Jewish Community Center applied its $15,000 in reopening funds to prepare the building for the opening of Camp Raanana and the Early Childhood Center (EEC), which included installing new exhaust fans, purchasing clear signage for inside and outside the building, and increasing cleaning services. Camp and the EEC successfully operated throughout the summer, allowing local families and kids the opportunity to reunite with friends, favorite teachers, and more. "Through this funding, Camp Raanana was able to ensure our campers had a safe space both within and outside the JCC building. With all that has happened these past few months, it was wonderful to be able to provide our campers with some normalcy and have another successful summer in the books," says Nikki Feinberg, director of camp and youth.

Congregations are also preparing for when they can safely reopen for in-person services and programming. Temple Beth Emeth collaborated with Jim Fuller, a member of the congregation, to build two plexiglass stations for its sanctuary, with the grant money going toward the shields along with PPE for staff and visitors. Melissa Sigmond, executive director of Temple Beth Emeth says that "while we do not have a set date for reopening in 2020, Temple Beth Emeth is focused on preparing our building, procuring necessary supplies, and other related tasks so we are ready to pivot from our virtual setting to in person."

Preparing and pivoting are common themes of the past six months, with greater Jewish Ann Arbor discovering new ways to bring the community together through virtual programming and distanced gatherings. While things are bound to look different for the start of the school year and High Holidays, Hebrew Day School and Beth Israel are finding creative ways to gather for leaning and worship. Hebrew Day School utilized its $15,000 in reopening funds to ensuring students can safely return to the classroom and is also providing learning tools in case they need to stay home. Chrome laptops will be available to those in need and students who cannot attend in-person will be able to learn alongside their teachers and classmates. Similarly to a majority of congregations, Beth Israel is planning for virtual High Holidays through streaming services. The congregation has directed some of the awarded funding toward purchasing digital machzors for congregants and high-quality cameras to increase clarity and sound for services.

As 5781 approaches, the Federation is proud to continue supporting the dedicated organizations that comprise greater Jewish Ann Arbor and ensure they are able to continue providing excellent services and programming to the community for years to come. ■

For more information about the Community Emergency Fund and how you can contribute, please visit www.jewishannarbor.org/ways-to-give/community-emergency-fund.

Federation welcomes Rachel Wall

Eileen Freed, special to the WJN

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is delighted to welcome Rachel Wall to the team as communications and development manager.

Rachel will support Federation's philanthropic efforts. She will work closely with the executive director to implement the Annual Community Campaign, including supporting volunteers and coordinating fundraising events and programs. In addition, Rachel will be Federation's key communications professional charged with developing and implementing a comprehensive and cohesive marketing communications strategy in support of Federation's mission. This is a new role for Federation — one designed to enhance all aspects of internal and external communications.

Rachel has been an active member of the Ann Arbor Jewish community since moving to town in 2012. She was previously the director of Federation's Keshet Hebrew High School program, as well as the office manager at Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor. In addition to her Jewish communal work, Rachel has worked to support adults with developmental disabilities. Rachel holds a bachelor's degree from Northwestern University and a Master's of Social Work from the University of Michigan, with a certificate in Jewish communal leadership. A member of the Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan, Rachel lives in Ann Arbor with her husband Logan and their eight-month-old daughter Abigail.

Rachel Wall

"I'm excited to join the Federation team and spend my time building and strengthening the Ann Arbor Jewish community," says Rachel. "There's so much to love about Jewish Ann Arbor. It's an honor to be part of an organization that makes so much of it possible."

Rachel may be reached at rachel@jewishfederation.org or 734-773-3533. ■

New book from CCAR

In a groundbreaking collaboration, CCAR Press, a division of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the Brigham Young University Religious Studies Center are honored to announce the publication of Understanding Covenants and Communities: Jews and Latter-day Saints in Dialogue. Edited by Rabbi Mark S. Diamond, senior lecturer in Jewish Studies at Loyola Marymount University and professor of practical rabbinics at the Academy for Jewish Religion California, and Dr. Andrew C. Reed, assistant professor of church history at Brigham Young University, the book is the first joint project by Jewish and Latter-day Saint publishers.

Understanding Covenants and Communities comes out of the Jewish–Latter-day Saint Academic Dialogue Project, a pathbreaking interfaith encounter between these two religious communities. The fruit of five conferences held semiannually since 2016, the volume addresses such themes as theological foundations, sacred scriptures, lived experience and worship, and culture and politics. Readers will emerge with a deeper understanding of the Jewish and Latter-day Saint traditions and how the two faith communities can engage in a meaningful dialogue.

"It is long past time that the Jewish-Christian dialogue be widened to include a Latter-day Saint-Jewish encounter," said Yossi Klein Halevi, Senior Fellow at the Shalom Hartman Institute in Jerusalem. "This brave and thoughtful collection brings together two faith communities that have much in common but know too little about the other. In overcoming misunderstandings and mistrust, we will learn to celebrate our differences as well as commonalities, and together sanctify God's name in a secular age."

In this book, readers will encounter chapters from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds — biblical studies, theology, women's studies, history, literature, and political science. Understanding Covenants and Communities speaks to the possibilities of careful, thoughtful engagement engineered to foster interfaith progress in our communities. This project will inspire and encourage readers to find opportunities to develop understanding through lived, sustained contact with other faith groups by examining historical, cultural, and theological narratives.

Diamond served as Executive Vice President of the Board of Rabbis of Southern California, director of the Los Angeles region of the American Jewish Committee, and rabbi of congregations in the Philadelphia, Washington, DC, and San Francisco metropolitan areas. Interfaith dialogue and engagement are hallmarks of his professional career. He is a past president of the Los Angeles Council of Religious Leaders and a cofounder of the Jewish–Latter-day Saint Academic Dialogue, with Reed.

Reed teaches world religions and Latter-day Saint history at Brigham Young University. He studied Russian and European history at Arizona State University and holds master's degrees from the University of Oxford and the Woolf Institute at the University of Cambridge. He is a fellow of the Religious Outreach Council at BYU.

"It has been an honor to collaborate with Brigham Young University on this project," says Rabbi Hara Person, Chief Executive of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. "Just as Understanding Covenants and Communities will inspire deeper interfaith conversation, we hope our partnership to produce this book will serve as a model of cooperation between publishers of different faiths."

"This is a historic endeavor between representatives of two remarkable faiths," said Scott C. Esplin, publications director of the BYU Religious Studies Center. "We are grateful to partner with the Central Conference of American Rabbis to further understanding and dialogue between our communities." ■

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Our endorsement is rooted in an abiding love for our country, the State of Michigan, and the values of our Jewish community: tzedek (justice), tikkun olam (repairing the world), and g'milut chasadim (acts of lovingkindness). Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are not only unrivaled, longtime friends of our Jewish community, but stalwart fighters of antisemitism and bigotry, strong defenders of Israel's security, and committed to the pursuit of a just and peaceful resolution to conflict in the Middle East.

Against a demagogue who has debased the highest office in our land to amplify dangerous and hateful conspiracy theories used by violent men to attack Jews and deface synagogues across America – including right here in Michigan – Joe Biden and Kamala Harris are the only choice for Jewish voters in Michigan.

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TBE Events

All services, events and classes are virtual. Please visit the TBE website for links and further information.

Prayer Services

Families with Young Children (FYC):

Tot Shabbat Service

Fridays, October, 2,9,16,23,305:45 p.m.

Tot Shabbat Services; 6:15 p.m. Shira Service
All of your favorite songs led by TBE's tot team, Cantor Hayut and Rabbi Whinston.

Shabbat Morning Torah Study
Saturdays, October, 3,10,17,24,31, 8:50 a.m.
Saturday Shabbat Service Saturdays, October, 3,10,17,24,31, 10:00 a.m.

Havdalah from the Whinston Home
Saturdays, October, 3,10,17,24,31, 7:30 p.m.
Join Rabbi Whinston and his family for a short prayer marking the end of Shabbat.

Daily Morning Blessings
Daily, 9:15 a.m.
Join Rabbi Whinston each morning via Zoom for a short morning blessing.

Daily Afternoon Blessings
Mondays-Thursdays 3 p.m.
Join Cantor Hayut each afternoon via Zoom for a short afternoon blessing.

Classes and Events

Weekly Lunch & Learn Virtual
Fridays, October, 2,9,16,23,30, Noon
Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch.

Saturday Torah Study
Saturdays, October, 3,10,17,24,31, 8:50 a.m.
Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston.

Women of TBE: Historical Novel Reading Group
Monday, October, 12, 12:30 p.m.
The WTBE Reading Group meets on the second Monday of each month, Contact Molly Lindner, burnham@umich.edu.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Classes
Mondays, October, 5,12,19,26, 6:00 p.m.
Join Cantor Regina Hayut for either an afternoon session or an evening session for one hour. To join the class, or for more information, contact Cantor Hayut, cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org.

Women's Torah Study

Mondays, October, 5,12,19,26 7:00 p.m.
An in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion led by Cantor Regina Hayut. The group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary to participate in the discussion. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org.

WTBE Fiber Arts

Mondays, October, 5,19, 7:00 p.m.

Talmud Tuesdays with Rabbi Alter
Tuesdays, October 6,13,20,27 11:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.
Join Rabbi Alter to learn about the history of Rabbinical literature and some tremendous texts from Talmud!

Adult Education with Rabbi Whinston
Wednesdays, October, 7,14,21,28, 1:00 p.m.
Utilizing the Shalom Hartman Institute Curriculum. Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood.

Meditation with Claire Weiner
Wednesdays, October, 7,14,21,28, 5:00 p.m.
Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session.

Wednesday Evening Torah Study
Wednesdays, October, 7,14,21,28, 7:00 p.m.

Biblical Book Club with Cantor Hayut
Thursdays, October, 1,8,15,22,29, 11:00 a.m.
For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut.

Meditation with Linda Greene
Thursdays, October, 1,8,15,22,29, 1:00 p.m.
Linda Greene offers brief Jewish teachings and leads a 20-30 minute meditation time. Contact Linda Greene, lingreene@gmail.com, with questions.

Kol HaLev Rehearsal and Meeting
Sundays, October, 4,11,18,25, 7:00 p.m.
For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut

Biblical Book Club with Cantor Hayut
Sundays, September, 4,11,18,25, 3:00 p.m.
For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut. ■

Women of TBE presents
Artemisia Vocal Trio
Diana Lawrence
Alexandra Olsavsky
Kaitlin Foley
SAT. OCT 24, 2020
7:30 p.m.
WATCH PARTY / Q & A
Tickets- $18 per person but additional donations welcomed
Purchase tickets online https://templebethemeth.org/women-of-tbe/
Join us in hearing these genre bending ethereal voices
WTBE FUNDRAISING EVENT

In Netflix's 'Away,' Ato Essandoh is an African-British-Jewish astronaut. It's not his first Jewish starring role.

Gabe Friedman, originally for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency

Ato Essandoh isn't Jewish, or British, or an astronaut — but he plays an African-British-Jewish astronaut on TV.

In Netflix's new hit drama "Away," about an international crew of astronauts who set out on a critical near-future mission to Mars, Essandoh plays botanist Kwesi Weisberg-Annan, an orphan who is raised by a white Jewish mother and an African Jewish father in England after his parents are killed in his native Africa. Kwesi prays in Hebrew when the going gets tough on the spacecraft — it happens often during the crew's multi-year journey — and early on he notes that he brought aboard a Torah.

Luckily for Essandoh, he already had the Jewish side of his role down, as he put it, since he had previously portrayed a Black Jewish character — Dr. Isidore Latham on "Chicago Med."

"The British part was the problem — I was like, now I have to learn a dialect! But I said, 'OK, I have the Jewish thing down,'" he said with a laugh on the phone from his home in Brooklyn.

He also had a head start on learning Jewish culture from his childhood in upstate New York, where he said he was surrounded by Jewish friends and brought up by parents who encouraged him to explore different histories and belief systems — ranging from Norse mythology to the New Testament to the fairy tale stories of West Africa.

The role of Kwesi is just the latest in a wide-ranging career that kicked into high gear after a supporting part as Natalie Portman's adopted brother in Zach Braff's 2004 indie hit "Garden State." Essandoh, now 48, spoke with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency about Black-Jewish representation on screen, his favorite Jewish prayer and his family's obsession with bagels.

This interview was edited and condensed for clarity.

JTA: This isn't giving much away for viewers, but there is a virus plot in this show. I have to know: Was the entire thing written and filmed before the COVID-19 crisis?

Essandoh: Yes. At Netflix they practice witchcraft, so I think that's what happened. [laughs]

When you saw this role, did you say to yourself: "Again with the Black-Jewish character?"

Where I grew up, when we moved from Schenectady to New Rochelle in like sixth grade, most of my friends were Jewish, so I got sort of a primer on a little bit of Hebrew, I got the Yiddish curses. I tasted bagels for the first time.

I have a funny story about that. We're African kids living up in Schenectady, and my dad would do business down in New York City sometimes. One time he brought back bagels. And we had never seen bagels, we were probably 7- and 8-year-old kids. We were like, "What is that round bread with a whole in it?!" And my dad is like, "Trust us, eat it." We're kids, so we said, "No, we don't know what it is!" Then he pulled out cream cheese and he's like, "You spread this stuff on it." And he's coming back to us like he's discovered something from the new world — and of course he's Ghanaian, so he's never seen this.

I will tell you, when we put those bagels in our mouths and ate them, we became the bagel family. To this day — since my parents have moved back to Ghana — if I dare go to Ghana from New York without bringing New York bagels, I will not be allowed to stay in the home. My mom is trying to teach herself how to make bagels. This is 30 years of bagel expertise. We love bagels in our family.

And I think that was kind of a precursor, speaking of witchcraft, to my career as an actor, now playing twice a Jewish character, which I think is great.

So how prepared were you this time? What kind of new things did you have to learn for this specific character?

"Chicago Med" prepped me for this. [For that role] I spoke to [Chicago Rabbi Capers Funnye] and what was nice about speaking to him was that in our culture, I guess writ large, a nonwhite person who's a Jewish person is a rarity to most of us. So it feels like somebody is just trying to make an interesting character for interesting character's sake. When I spoke to the rabbi, he was like "Oh no, Black Jewish people and nonwhite-looking Jewish people are more than you think. They're all over, even in Ghana." And for an actor what that helps with is then I don't feel like I'm sort of the sore thumb that somebody slapped together; there's a real person here. Part of acting is just allowing yourself to believe you're that person.

So that helped me with this character [in "Away"] because i was like "Yeah, OK, Black Jewish guy, no problem."

But then speaking Hebrew in an English dialect was also sort of a mind-bending thing.

Any words or phrases that you struggled with?

I have to give props to the coach that they got for me out in Vancouver, who I believe is Israeli — he made it very easy. I think I can still do the "Traveler's Prayer," let's see: Y'hi ratzon milfanecha Adonai Eloheinu ve-lohei avoteinu she-tolichenu l'shalom v'tatz'idenu l'shalom … I can't even believe I can say that part, oh my God. I think I'm honorary at this point. [laughs]

What I love about that prayer, at least how I translate it, is that it's about the journey. It's almost about "appreciate the journey, appreciate the opportunity of being able to go to a different place than you were before." And hopefully you learn something, hopefully you do not die on the way, but learn and strengthen yourself through that travel, and that's a lovely sort of way to look at life.

The conversation about Jews of color has really flourished and expanded in recent years. Have you followed that thread at all, and have any Jews of color reached out to you expressing appreciation or anything like that?

That I haven't seen yet directly, but I think that it is happening, and that brings up a broader point that you are making, which is that it's seeing all of the diversity of different people, especially right now … is something that is tantamount to our progress as a human species. We have to learn the constructs that we have been under — like my construct that "all Jewish people look white, that's what they are." No, there's a whole set of people who practice Judaism who don't look this way. All protagonists of movies have to be white men — no, look at Hillary Swank, look what she's doing [in "Away"]. And what it does is give us a diversity of ideas, a diversity of things that we can learn from each other and everybody belongs at this table and nothing should be off the table because it can only make us stronger. That's my feel-good message of the day.

President Obama used the Passover Seder to draw parallels between the African and Jewish quests for freedom over the millennia. In "Away," there's a scene in which Kwesi's adoptive father makes a similar kind of comparison as he explains to young Kwesi why he adopted Judaism. Have these roles made you think more about the similarities between African and Jewish culture?

It's funny, having all the Jewish friends I've had all throughout my life, I realize it was only last year — and I'm mad at all my Jewish friends at this point — when my agent invited me to a Seder. I had never been to one before, which is extraordinary for someone like me, and what I absolutely loved — I'm not a very religious person — but what I loved was the family sitting around, talking about this shared history, this shared story, and laughing and joking about uncle so-and-so and auntie da-da-da, and there's this sort of ritual which forces or which encourages the family to bond. Which is the same thing with my family. When I go to Ghana, since our family's now spread all over the world, my dad has this thing that he calls the "family state of the union." We all go around in circles and shake each others' hands and then we just sit there and talk about the year — "How did the year go for you? Oh, this is what happened, this is what I'm worried about, this is the thing that I'm looking forward to, I got this new television show, I can't wait for you guys to see." I feel like there are a lot of those parallels.

The thing my mom used to tell me all the time growing up, because I've always been a person who's stuck between multiple cultures — American and Ghanaian and Black and this and that — my mom said you know having that kind of diversity, see it this way, take the things that work from each culture and leave the other stuff behind, make your own culture, make your own identity. You get to pick and choose because you have a diversity of choices, and that's something I've tried to uphold throughout my life.

This character has a deep religious narrative; it's not just a token inclusion. Did playing it make you rethink your own spirituality at all?

I thought about it, but I thought about it in the way that I have an admiration for people of faith. Faith is the belief in something with the absence of evidence, so you're looking into the void and your faith tells you that there's somebody or something there that will help you and will guide you and has a plan — as opposed to somebody like me, who looks into the void and goes, "All right, guys, I don't know where we're going either, let's all hold hands and try to figure this out on the way." And I think somewhere in the middle is perhaps the reality of the universe.

So it didn't necessarily change my point of view, but it has sort of helped me navigate the things that I think are true and have empathy for another person's way of looking at the universe. Because who says I'm the one who's right? I don't know.

While we're seeing greater diversity on screen, it's a tricky time to play a character with traits that you as an actor don't have. Do you ever think about people calling you out for being a non-Jewish actor playing Jewish characters? And what do you think about the whole debate?

Yeah, I think about it a lot with this role and my "Chicago Med" role, and a role I had just this past summer on Amazon's "Tales From the Loop" where I played a gay man. And it's really tricky because you can argue that I'm not Jewish, but you can also argue that I'm not a botanist nor am I an astronaut nor am I a British citizen nor am I a Ghanaian citizen.

So I don't understand the problem in a binary situation. I understand it if you're doing "Raisin in the Sun" and you cast the family as white people. That is problematic because this play is about being Black. There's a difference between something that is tied to the identity of the piece that you're doing and an actor playing a role. And so I think it should be a much more nuanced conversation than it is, and I do think about that all the time, I do anticipate people saying, "If you're not even Jewish, if you're not even somebody who says you believe in God, why should you have the right to play a religious character, much less a Jewish character?" I don't know how to answer that question.

I love to act and I love to tell stories, but I also want to have respect for the stories I'm telling. If it's a situation where it's going to ruin the show or people aren't going to watch it, then I'll step down — I mean not for this show, too late now I guess — that's something I have to take into consideration. Because I don't want to offend people. I wouldn't want to offend everyone who's a Jewish person who would look at that and go "Oh, my god, what is he doing!" If I've done something wrong, I don't want to be in the boat of maligning a whole entire group of people. So it's a really delicate situation. I hope I've brought some reality to it and I haven't shined the wrong kind of attention to it.

So what if someone comes to you, let's say a few roles from now, with another Black-Jewish character. What's your response?

I guess I'd say I've been doing a pretty good job, that's why you're coming to me, I'm the Black-Jewish expert at this point. I'll stick it on my resume — I'll put the "Traveler's Prayer" on my resume. ■

Photography by Jan Z. Cohen

For The Monarchs

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For more information about TBE's Religious and Hebrew School programming, contact Rabbi Daniel at rabbialter@templebethemeth.org

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Arts Around Town: Art Talks with Wendy Evans

The following online series is presented by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor.

How to Look at Art with the Eyes of an Artist

Thursday, October 15, 7 p.m.

Arthur Schopenhauer said, "Treat a work of art like a prince: let it speak to you first." Georgia O'Keeffe wrote, "Nobody sees a flower, really — it is so small — we haven't time, and to see takes time, like to have a friend takes time." In this richly illustrated presentation we'll talk about how to get a work of art to speak to you and how to make friends with the art you see.

Musée de Louvre, Paris

Thursday, October 22, 7 p.m.

Last year the Louvre had 9.6 million visitors, making it the most visited museum in the world. Happily, we can Zoom to see its art up close without fighting the crowds. Many of the world's most famous paintings and sculptures are here.

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Women in Art

Thursday, October 29, 7 p.m.

Over the centuries, men making art have portrayed women for the delectation of male patrons. Artists tended to show women either as goddesses or evil temptresses. This illustrated presentation looks at how the male gaze has rendered the female and explores the changes when women have the chance to become artists and speak for themselves.

Wendy Evans

Wendy Evans is an art historian with advanced degrees from Oxford University and Wayne State University. A long-time volunteer at the Detroit Institute of Art, Wendy taught art history at WSU, University of Michigan-Dearborn, CCS, and the DIA. She loves to share her passion for art with groups around the metro area and beyond. For more information on Wendy, go to www.art-talks.org. For more information or to register, visit jccannarbor.org or contact Noemi Herzig, director of Jewish Cultural Arts and Education at noemiherzig@jccannarbor.org or 734-971-0990. These three free art talks are sponsored by Prudence Rosenthal. ■

Art Talks

Like a sukkah, life may feel fragile right now.
Like a sukkah, we can fill it with joy.

Fill our communal sukkah with joy
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Jewish Federation OF GREATER ANN ARBOR

Kids in the kitchen

Lonnie Sussman, special to the WJN

I've seen Facebook posts of amazing adventures in delicious cooking and baking. So many of you are experimenting with your own creations or being brave enough to try making things you never thought you would. Kudos and congratulations to all of you.

I have also tried my hand at food I haven't made in years, as well as new recipes and, now, about a million different veggie burgers. Some of those recipes are in last month's WJN. It turns out that techina is a great addition for all those recipes as it helps bind the ingredients and adds flavor, so try that.

Adults aren't the only ones trying out new kitchen skills. When "summer vacation" began — back in mid-March — a lot of younger people took up kitchen challenges. Since I have easy access to a few local kids, it is their recipes (or ones they looked up online) that I'd like to feature. Yes, it's nepotism, but if you have stories about your own children or grandchildren who have learned new cooking skills, write to me about them and I will include the recipes in the next column. Email me at lonniesuss@aol.com with the subject "another recipe." Remember, a story about the chef/baker would be appreciated.

On Facebook I've seen incredible fancy meals put together by some older teens. Jessie S. made her family an amazing Indian feast with a number of dishes. Elijah M. made homemade noodles with homemade sauces. Younger kids like Sam and Anna S. helped in the kitchen with stirring (mac and cheese) and making pancakes and waffles from mixes (with supervision for the stove part). Nava and Ilan S. have special knives, sharp enough to cut up vegetables but made for little hands. They cut up cucumbers and put some dips out for them. Others, like Alo S., help make cookies by mixing and rolling the dough and putting them on the baking sheets.

Our niece, Sadie, just started remote middle school. She's actually quite accomplished in the kitchen and has helped her parents cook or bake since she was very young. This summer she added to her skills by choosing desserts to make to celebrate our family birthdays. The first dessert is called Chocolate Wacky Cake or Depression Cake. She found the recipe online from the website, spicysouthernkitchen.com, but that's not why she made it. As she told us, she was three when she read about Wacky Cake in an Amelia Bedelia book. We had dinner together (outside and socially distanced) and Sadie wanted to make this cake for dessert. You can keep the cake vegan by adding sprinkles or powdered sugar or add whipped cream. Later in the summer she tried a layered sorbet with different fruits and basil! Puree each fruit separately and add sugar if needed. Freeze. Serve in a fancy glass, with scoops of each fruit separated from each other. She added chopped up basil to the strawberry layer.

Matan is our oldest grandchild. He turned 16 at the end of August. As a young child he was a highly specialized (another way to say picky) eater, favoring noodles, bread, and more bread. His tastes expanded at summer camp into scrambled eggs, potatoes and, strangely, beet greens. But, just as kids keep maturing, so did his taste buds. First, he tried his hand at vegetable soup. It included boiling water, adding cut up carrots, celery, onions, and whatever spices in the cabinet smelled good. He said, "It never turned out very good," but he learned that sautéing the vegetables first, and using butter, helped the flavor. Shortly thereafter, his family ate some Asian takeout and he thought, Why spend so much time picking out the parts he liked? So he followed the recipe on the back of the eggroll wrappers and made his own version of the spring rolls. Sometimes he added the soy sauce or the teriyaki sauce. Further into quarantine, he decided to start baking. The first bread was a no knead bread, but he moved on to scones (from the YouTube channel You Suck At Cooking), challah with chocolate chips and sprinkles, marble cake, and babka from Yotam Ottolenghi's book, Jerusalem. That recipe is two pages long and took him two days. Now he's learning how to decorate cupcakes and cakes. He also learned to make salmon baked on cedar planks with Teriyaki sauce and slices of lemon. Who knows what the future brings?

Chocolate Wacky Cake, also known as Depression Cake

This cake was popular in the Depression because it was cheap to make. It was also very popular during World War II due to the rationing of eggs, butter, and milk. I think Amelia Bedelia knew how to bake with limited ingredients and a budget. If you still have your books from this series, I recommend you read a few as you eat the cake.

1½ cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking soda
½ tsp salt
½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 cup sugar
1 tbs cider vinegar
1 tsp vanilla extract
5 tbs vegetable oil
1 cup water

Combine all the dry ingredients in a bowl and then spread in an eight-by-eight ungreased baking pan. Form two small wells — one for the vinegar, one for the vanilla extract — on either end of the pan, and one larger well in the middle for the oil. Pour 1 cup of water over it all and mix everything together with a fork. Bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees or until a toothpick inserted in the middle comes out clean.

We ate the cake with whipped cream on top, and it was so good! You can also frost it.

Frosting

¼ cup milk
⅓ cup butter
3 tbs unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tsp vanilla extract
2½ to 3 cups powdered sugar
Sprinkles, optional

Heat the milk, butter, and cocoa powder in a small saucepan until it comes to a simmer. Remove from heat and add the vanilla. Stir in the powdered sugar, one cup at a time, until smooth. Pour the icing over the cake.

No Knead Bread from the New York Times and Mark Bittman

All you need, not knead, is time. Instead of kneading the bread, you wait or return to your Zoom class or meeting.

3⅓ cups of all-purpose or bread flour
¼ tsp instant yeast
2 tsp kosher salt
Cornmeal or wheat bran, as needed

In a large bowl combine the flour, yeast, and salt. Add 1⅓ cups plus two tablespoons of water and stir until blended. The dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and let it rest at a warm room temperature (70 degrees) for at least 12 hours (but 18 would be better). Look for bubbles on the surface of the dough. Lightly flour a work surface area and place the dough on it. Sprinkle with a little more flour, and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with the plastic wrap and let rest for about 15 minutes. Then, using just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking to your fingers or the work surface area, quickly but gently shape it into a ball. Generously coat a cotton towel with flour, cornmeal, or wheat bran, and place the dough seam side down on the towel. Dust the top with more flour, cornmeal, or wheat bran, and cover with another cotton towel. Let rise about two more hours. It should more than double in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger. Preheat oven at least 30 minutes before baking to 450 degrees. Put a six- to eight-quart heavy covered pot made of a materials like cast iron, enamel, Pyrex, or ceramic in the oven as it heats. After 30 minutes and when the dough is ready, carefully slide a hand under the towel and turn the dough over into the pot, seam side up. It will look messy, but don't worry. Shake the pan a few times to evenly distribute the dough. Cover with the lid and bake for 30 minutes. Then remove the lid and bake another 15 to 30 minutes until the loaf is beautifully browned. Cool on a rack.

Not Matan's Soup, also known as Butternut Squash and Apple Cider Soup

This will be tastier than his first tries.

¼ cup butter, olive oil or vegetable oil
1 large yellow onion, chopped
4-6 apples, peeled and cubed
5-6 cups butternut squash, peeled and cubed
1 quart vegetable stock
2-3 cans full fat coconut milk
½ cup apple cider (boil and reduced apple cider)
¼-½ cup maple syrup or another sweetener
2-3 tbs lemon juice
Salt and pepper to taste

Melt the butter or oil in saucepot over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until it is translucent. Add the apples and cook for a few minutes until they start to caramelize. Then add the vegetable stock, squash, and coconut milk. Bring to a boil and then simmer for about 20 minutes or until the squash and apple are tender enough to puree. Add the sweetener and salt and pepper. Remove a cup of the liquid before puréeing in case you need to thin the soup a little. Purée until silky smooth. ■

Artemisia Vocal Trio's concert watch party

Yuni Aaron, special to the WJN

On Saturday, October 24, Women of Temple Beth Emeth will host Artemisia Vocal Trio's Watch Party. Heralding from Chicago where their performance has been praised for "sincerity, wit and mind-blowing technique," the trio will surely dazzle with their unique sound and superb programming.

Artemisia Vocal Trio members Kaitlin Foley, Diana Lawrence, and Alexandra Olsavsky formed the trio in 2014. Artemisia has a soft spot for American vernacular music (pop, jazz, folk, and soul) but doesn't stop there. The repertoire of vocal styles reaches near and far, from Appalachian folk tunes to Tushetian highlander cries, Cuban dance music, and music from the island of Corsica, to name a few.

One of the members of Artemisia Trio, Diana Lawrence, who grew up in Ann Arbor, may be familiar to some through her annual performances at the Ann Arbor Summer Festival. Lawrence comes from a very musical family. Her parents, Ted and Wendy Lawrence, sing with Kol Halev, the TBE choir. She and her brother, Cantor Rick Lawrence, have joined their parents, lending their beautiful voices as a quartet to TBE's High Holiday services. Lawrence grew up singing in Temple Beth Emeth under Cantor Annie Rose (now emerita) who through youth choir, encouraged young people to make music together and provided opportunity to perform in a supported environment, which Lawrence credits as an immense influence in her becoming a musician. Although she graduated from the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theater & Dance in voice and piano performance, Lawrence has since added composition to her repertoire.

Artemisia Trio commissions and performs newly composed works by living female composers. Artemisia is a name of a great ancient female warrior, an Italian painter, and a Greek goddess of hunt. The trio does outreach to community and youth ensembles, drawing from the strength of its namesake in its message to the community, infusing female empowerment through cultural literacy. Cosponsored by TBE Music Fund and assisted by Cantor Regina Lambert-Hayut, the trio will also provide virtual workshops to Kol Halev, the TBE choir.

WTBE invites the community to view this unique performance at 7:30 p.m. on October 24. Purchase your tickets at https://templebethemeth.org/women-of-tbe for $18/person. The concert watching information will be emailed once the ticket is purchased. There will be a live Q&A following the concert. The recorded concert will remain online for one week following the concert so it can be viewed multiple times for those who purchase the tickets. Contact:WTBE@templebethemeth.org. ■

Leading Jewish social justice organization launches racial justice guide

Avodah, the leading organization developing the next generation of social justice leaders driven by Jewish values, launched a new Racial Justice Guide in September, as Jewish organizations reexamine their organizational culture in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter movement.

The guide is a resource for Jewish organizations and institutions to pursue internal change at all levels and create diverse, equitable, and inclusive cultures, especially for Jews of Color, who are underrepresented in Jewish community leadership.

This guide was informed by the work of the racial justice task force Avodah formed in 2016 to help evaluate its own racial justice work, both internally and externally. The task force was composed of Avodah staff, alumni, and Board and Advisory Council members. After reviewing data from Avodah and the broader Jewish community, as well as interviews with staff, alumni of color, and other Jewish leaders of color, the task force, with the help of a consultant, identified a set of recommendations broken out into short-term steps that were easier to implement and longer-term changes that would take more time.

After five years of self-reflection, Avodah is ready to share with the community what it has learned about racial diversity, inclusion, and equity in a way that reflects the political and pandemic-driven realities faced by Jewish organizations.

"Avodah works to create a more just world, informed by our Jewish values. Jewish organizations have an opportunity and obligation to step up and address racial justice, especially within our organizations," says Cheryl Cook, CEO of Avodah. "The Jewish community is stronger when there is space for everyone to thrive."

While the guide was created after years of deep, inward-looking analysis, Cook notes that the work will — and should — be ongoing: "We understand that becoming an antiracist and fully inclusive Jewish organization takes time and resources. At Avodah, we're continuing to do the work and learning as we do it. We're excited to offer this guide to the Jewish community as a step toward creating a more just and inclusive Jewish community."

The Racial Justice Guide breaks down organizations' antiracist work into three phases: Auditing, Education and Training, and Implementing Changes. Organizations are encouraged to start with an audit in order to build a baseline understanding of their diversity. In the Education and Training section, Avodah compiled a list of recommended JOC diversity experts and resources. In the Implementing Changes section, Avodah details the tactical steps that organizations can incorporate into their culture and operations for a long-term inclusion plan.

The racial justice guide is available for organizations to download and use for free. Avodah intentionally made the guide open-ended, since the work of racial justice is continually evolving and improving, and will continue to update the guide on an ongoing basis.

For assistance or questions about the guide, organizations can contact Amanda Lindner at alindner@avodah.net. Founded in 1998, Avodah develops lifelong social justice leaders whose work is informed by Jewish values and who inspire the Jewish community to work toward a more just and equitable world. To learn more about Avodah visit www.avodah.net and follow on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. ■

Local Jewish CSC seeks insights from Jews and non-Jews of Color

By David Nelson

As the Chair of the Community Security Committee of the Jewish Community of Greater Ann Arbor, I'd like to hear from Jews and non-Jews of color: How do the security measures you see at synagogues, community centers, and community events make you feel?

American Jewish communities have a long and complicated relationship with government, law enforcement, and private security: Owing to the persistence of violent anti-Jewish sentiment on the American fringe, most Jewish organizations have individually forged relationships with law enforcement or invested heavily in private security measures (often both). This seems to have worked out well: Until recently, there hadn't been attack with casualties on an American Jewish congregation in decades.

Today, a majority of Americans are finally beginning to take a hard look at the effects community safety and policing practices have had on people of color. This is good work, and long overdue. As Jews, we recognize a fundamental obligation to seek justice and take action to repair the world — not perpetuate its inequities. If the safety measures we've embraced until now are inadvertently increasing inequity, we want to find new answers.

Our local CSC, part of a nationwide Jewish Community Security Network, is an ad hoc group composed of people from a various Jewish congregations and communal organizations, coming together to assist each other in improving safety and security at our events and in our spaces. Neither I nor the Ann Arbor area CSC set any binding policies. We are instead dedicated to ensuring that local Jewish organizations have all of the resources they need to make informed decision and take meaningful action. We want those decisions and actions to be fully informed — including understanding the potential unintentional impacts security decisions could have on historically underrepresented, marginalized, and neglected members of our Jewish community, and the larger Washtenaw County community.

I would love to talk to Jewish and non-Jewish people of color about their experiences, thoughts, feelings, hopes, and concerns regarding the security measures they see at Jewish organizations and events.

These conversations will be held in strictest confidence, and can even be totally anonymous if you prefer. I want to do everything I can to make sure that everyone who has found a spiritual home in Judaism will find a physical home here. I can be reached at dave@davideriknelson.com. ■

Jackie Robinson and me

By Martin Stolzenberg

Since the killing of George Floyd, Blacks Lives Matter is constantly in the news. Floyd's death sparked protests all over the country, even the world, and it seems to me that public opinion has mostly been favorable to the cause. The protests that enveloped over 2,500 U.S. towns and cities are different from the protests of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Photos and newsreels of those marches, protests, and rallies 60 years ago almost always showed Black faces. The current movement is has energized everyone, particularly white people.

But there are naysayers, those who rightly condemn the violence and looting but wrongfully blame BLM for orchestrating them. The critics do not hear that these acts took place at night, long after the BLM protests had ended. It has been shown that any theft was the work of organized criminals who took advantage of the situation and used sophisticated techniques to loot targeted stores and escape.

I am one of the many who have not joined the protests, but are sympathetic to the cause. So, I wonder, what does a retired 84-year-old white Jew from the streets of Brooklyn, living in retirement in lovely Ann Arbor, have in common with these protesting people?

I'm thinking back to my childhood, and this brings me to thoughts of Jackie Robinson. I was growing up in Bensonhurst, a blue-collar neighborhood with plenty of schoolyards and baseball fields. There were mostly Jews and Italians there. I knew no people of color and had no impressions of them, one way or the other.

The year 1947 changed all that. I was 11 years old. Jackie Robinson, the first African American to break the color barrier of baseball, joined the Brooklyn Dodgers that year. He was an immediate sensation. I became enamored of him and the way he had fought the prejudice surrounding his entry into professional baseball. I listened entranced to Red Barber doing the radio broadcasts. If it was a night game after my bedtime, I still had the game on softly in a darkened room, listening in on my dome shaped radio. The next day I couldn't wait to read the sports columns in the newspaper to see how the game and Jackie were described.

The way he played baseball was eye opening. He ran the bases relentlessly. He teased the pitchers and stole bases easily. Then he would make pitchers balk because they were so nervous when he was on base. When caught in a rundown he would elude being tagged out. He would even steal home. No one else did all that.

I read everything about the rookie sensation I could find on the newsstands, and even bought the Jackie Robinson comic book about his life. After the season, there was a biographical movie starring Jackie that I went to see. The comic book and movie made me into an even stronger Jackie fan. I continued to follow and admire him for his 10 years as a Brooklyn Dodger.

Much later I realized how my childhood knowledge of Jackie's struggle with prejudice had a profound impact on me. He made me realize how all people of color had to deal with unfair disadvantages, with two strikes against them in much of this country. Largely because of reading about him and his courage, I have zero tolerance for racial bias. I wonder how many other young people, or even adults, he affected in the same way.

What would he have thought of the BLM movement? I remembered reading a little-known story about him in a biography by Arnold Rampersaud. Jackie was a newly minted second lieutenant, stationed in Fort Hood, near Belton, Texas, during World War II. Catching a ride one day to his camp on a military bus, he sat next to a woman he knew, and was conversing with her. The driver ordered Robinson to the back of the bus. Jackie refused to go. He knew that the army, in 1944, forbade segregation on its bases, and that included this bus. The driver threatened to make trouble when they arrived at the final stop.

At the central bus depot, the argument grew more heated, and Jackie was arrested, charged with being disrespectful to the officer investigating the situation and other military personnel involved in the case. It turned out that the arresting personnel couldn't abide that he was talking back to them as an equal and an army officer. Ultimately, he was acquitted.

This incident was a good 11 years before Rosa Parks and the famous Montgomery Alabama bus ride. Jackie Robinson risked being dishonorably discharged and sent to jail because he wouldn't allow himself to be bullied in a small town in segregated Texas. It's no wonder that he could stand up to all the bigotry he was exposed to when breaking the color barrier in baseball. And this all happened before the world knew who Jackie Robinson was.

I think about Jackie Robinson and the current protests. What would he think of them? This Brooklyn boy knows Jackie Robinson, who pointed toward equality and fairness for many, including me as an 11-year-old, would have heartily approved. ■

Who is the man behind PJ Library and LIFE & LEGACY® Programs?

Emily Benedeck, Originally for Tablet Magazine at tabletmag.com, reprinted with permission. Introduction by Margaret Schreiber, LIFE & LEGACY coordinator in Ann Arbor:

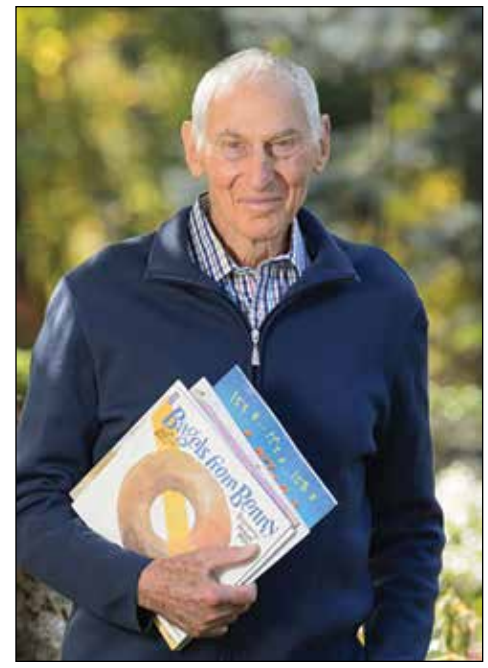
My daughter Julia was born in 2005, the same year that Harold Grinspoon rolled out the PJ Library program. When Julia enrolled in a Jewish preschool two years later, it was such a thrill for her to receive books in the mail from PJ Library. My entire family loved reading these stories together! Julia is now 15 years old, and we have since moved to Ann Arbor. During that time, Harold Grinspoon developed another amazing program, called LIFE & LEGACY. Ann Arbor applied and was accepted into the LIFE & LEGACY program as part of the eighth cohort, and I was thrilled to begin my job as LIFE & LEGACY coordinator this past January. Tammy Dollin, our LIFE & LEGACY consultant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), conducted a crucial training for 54 team members from 11 participating organizations on September 1 via Zoom. It was a very informative evening, and the program has now officially kicked-off! Team participant Barb Banet from the Jewish Cultural Society read the following article on Harold Grinspoon in Tablet says, "This was "such an interesting article! I really enjoyed reading it and learning about the challenges Harold Grinspoon faced. It makes participating in one of his Foundation programs even more meaningful." I hope you find this piece as informative and enjoyable as both Barb and I did!

Harold Grinspoon, who might just be the most important Jewish philanthropist you've never heard of, is a wealthy businessman who failed at many early ventures, a Jew who doesn't regularly attend shul, and a dyslexic who runs the world's largest Jewish book program.

"I chuckle about it all the time," he told Tablet recently in an email. "I was the kid who struggled with reading and spelling, but I have always loved stories. When I thought about the power of stories and conversation to pass on the richness of Jewish life, and I discovered that there were beautiful Jewish children's books on the market, I saw an idea worth moving forward. If you are entrepreneurial, you find ways to reach your goals."

The signature initiative of Grinspoon's Agawam, Massachusetts-based foundation, PJ Library, sends more than 650,000 children's books every month in seven languages to families in 27 countries who are raising Jewish children — from Venezuela to Ukraine to Australia and South Africa. Many of the families may have only one Jewish parent. They may live in towns where there are no other Jews. While some families are fully engaged in Jewish life, a good number report that PJ Library is their only Jewish resource.

Eric Robbins, CEO of the Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta, said: "PJ Library is one of the most innovative and thoughtful ideas that the Jewish world has seen. Think of it: A gift from the Jewish community is arriving every month in my mailbox — with my child's name on it, a book that is adding to a growing Jewish library in our home. And no one is asking me for money for it. It's revolutionary. Also, it's nonjudgmental. You say you're Jewish? Fine, that's good enough for us."



In North America, books go to children from birth through age eight. At nine years old, children can join PJ Our Way, where they choose from a selection of chapter books, graphic novels, fiction, biographies, and nonfiction until they are bar or bat mitzvah age.

Most of the books come from commercial publishers and aren't necessarily explicitly Jewish. PJ Library adds material on the flaps to draw out Jewish themes and to direct families to additional resources and activities. PJ Library also has its own imprint, which has produced 22 titles to date, with 10 more planned for the coming year. Providing these books constitutes outreach of the most subtle and profound kind: the occasion for a parent to read and speak intimately with her child during the few moments of calm before sleep and dreams, to spark the child's imagination with the spoken word, and to encourage the child to ask questions — the quintessence of Judaism.

In distributing the same stories to all Jewish children, no matter where they live, in hopes of establishing common bonds, the program buttresses Grinspoon's abiding hope: "That we can hold different perspectives and viewpoints, and we can engage with our Judaism differently, but yet remember that we are one people."

Born in 1929, Harold Grinspoon grew up in Auburndale, a village of Newton, Massachusetts. He received lessons in antisemitism wherever he turned — from the schoolyard bullies who called him a "Christ killer" and "Jew boy," to the Boy Scout leader on whose door hung a sign reading: "No dogs

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or Jews." His daughter-in-law Winnie Sandler Grinspoon said, "He wasn't from a religious family, but he knew life would be easier if he wasn't a Jew — whatever that was."

Being Jewish wasn't his only problem. "I was a dysfunctional child," he recalled in his laconic Boston accent in the video. "My poor mum. I can't spell today and I never could spell. So she took me to spelling lessons, speech lessons, posture lessons. I still can't spell. And I had psychological problems." He had the distinction of being the only Jewish student in the vocational track at Newton High School.

"It all started because I was born a lefty," he explained. "And in those days, as a Jewish kid, for some reason, you couldn't be a lefty. So my mother made me a righty." This led to frustration, anger, learning problems, and psychological issues. Pediatricians today discourage changing the natural handedness of children; research has also shown it can lead to learning and behavioral problems, and also permanent brain changes. His self-professed inferiority complex was exacerbated by the fact his older brother Lester — who died last month at age 92 — was "a genius" who became a psychiatrist after attending Harvard Medical School.

The only way Harold felt he could distinguish himself was by making money, a talent that manifested itself when as a boy he successfully sold vegetables and eggs for his father and aunt. At Marlboro College, which he attended for a couple years, he bought an old Maytag wringer washing machine and, he said, "put a 25-cent coin slot onto it. I didn't pay for the hot water, I didn't pay for the electricity. I just got the quarters. And that was the beginning of my entrepreneurship."

"Not having any money growing up," he said, "I had a respect for wealth." His father died at 51, leaving four children behind, including 19-year-old Harold. After a variety of efforts, some successful, many not, at 30 years old, he bought a multifamily house, fixed it up, and rented it. Then he bought another, and the company he created, Aspen Square, is now one of the top 50 privately held property investment and management firms in the U.S. Basically, the company buys derelict apartment complexes and rebuilds them, turning them into attractive, well-built, successful properties. As he put it, "buying someone else's mismanagement and repositioning them."

After a bout with tongue cancer 25 years ago, Grinspoon began to think about his legacy: "I couldn't just die as the guy making money. That was debasing, I thought." He planned to leave his fortune, estimated at $500 million, for others to manage as they saw fit, but his third wife, Diane Troderman, friend Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, and business partner Jeremy Pava encouraged him to lay the groundwork for his foundation and its goals. He realized, "People with wealth have to find a home for their wealth — where they feel good about giving and what's meaningful to them."

And so he got to work, using his status as an outsider to ask questions, energizing the creativity of a natural lefty to think outside the box, all the while motivated by the childlike sense of wonder he still retains. And, crucial to his strengths, he is unafraid to abandon what is unsuccessful.

There was one thing he knew: He wanted to give back to the Jewish people.

"One of the things that is striking about Harold is his and the foundation's abiding belief that there is one Jewish people," said Rabbi Ethan Tucker, president and rosh yeshiva at the Hadar Institute. "And that in some basic sense everyone has to find a way to be connected to one another and to work together toward a shared future. Look at PJ Library — the basic claim is that every household with a Jewish child should be engaging with a shared canon. That is not only an ambition to scale a project, that is a statement of values."

The idea for the books came to him in the mid-2000s at the Seder table of his eldest son and daughter-in-law, Winnie. When Winnie handed out books from the Israel Book Store in Brookline, Massachusetts, as afikoman prizes, Harold was struck by the enthusiasm with which his grandchildren embraced them. Winnie remembers she bought her son a book about the first Israeli astronaut, Ilan Ramon, and her daughter a book about a little girl who had immigrated to America.

Harold asked Winnie all kinds of questions: "Do they like getting books? Are there other Jewish books? Where do you get them?" A week or so later, Harold asked Winnie to buy him $500 worth of similar volumes. "I brought them over to their house," says Winnie, "and he and Diane read them all."

Around the same time, Harold happened to hear about Dolly Parton's Imagination Library on NPR and became a local funding partner. In 2005, he created PJ Library, using Parton's partnering model. Today, PJ Library in the U.S. has 200 local partners who help the program reach families, pay for the books, and provide additional programming. "We like to say it costs a lot to be this free," says Winnie, who serves as president of the HGF and a member of the board.

PJ Library also has an Israeli arm, called Sifriyat Pijama, launched in 2009, which operates in conjunction with the Israeli Ministry of Education. In partnership with the Education Ministry and Price Philanthropies of San Diego, HGF also runs a version for Arab Israeli children called Maktabat al Fanoos (Lantern Library), which is the largest Arabic book gifting program in the world. In Israel and abroad, the books are given out in school, and then later, taken home.

Last year, HGF distributed books to 400,000 Israeli children in Hebrew and 190,000 in Arabic. To date the two programs have given 23 million books to more than 1.25 million children. Just as the same Torah portion is read every week in shuls around the world, so all of Israel's Jewish children of the same age group in public school receive the same books. Although the program is wildly successful, nothing in Israel is easy — when choosing books, they must consider, are the clothes in the illustrations modest enough for a religious family? Will a secular family be put off by a religious theme?

Galina Vromen, head of HGF operations in Israel, said, "It took five years before we found a story on Shabbat that both conveyed the spirit of Shabbat and was suitable for the wide spectrum of families we serve. The most common theme of Shabbat books was 'let your parents sleep,' which was not the message we wanted to convey. Most of the rest of the books in the market were controversial for one segment of the population or another. In the end, we found an anthologized story that we turned into a separate picture book — The Missing Spice, about the specialness of Shabbat — which left the door open for families to talk about what made Shabbat special for them."

Sifriyat Pijama is also engaged in an effort to reissue classic children's books written by the country's founding fathers and mothers. "One of the things that is fascinating about Israeli children's literature," says Vromen, is that "all the great writers wrote for children, too. It was part of the revitalization of the Hebrew language. Walt Whitman never wrote for children, but Leah Goldberg did, and David Grossman does, and so do Edgar Keret and Meir Shalev. We see those stories as part of the foundational stories of Israel. We talk about Israeli Jewish cultural heritage." HGF's mandate to create common ground also reaches to Israel's Arab children; 20 books are common to the Arab and Jewish programs.

PJ Library expands its reach in the United States through its partner organizations, like JCCs and Jewish Federations, which sponsor over 3,000 PJ Library events in North America every year, further engaging families in Jewish life. And PJ Library now includes multiple book titles by Israeli authors so that American children can read Israeli stories, too.

"Books are the core of our universe," says Winnie, but Harold also has other passions, among them Jewish overnight camps and public art. JCamp180 provides day-to-day leadership to a select group of not-for-profit Jewish camps to help make them stronger, organizationally and financially. Approximately 60,000 children and young adults attend these camps during a regular summer. (HGF recently gave a $10 million emergency infusion to aid JCamp 180 member camps affected by COVID-19.)

Grinspoon is also dedicated to helping Jewish institutions shore up their financial health. He realized with distress that the American Jewish community was missing out on the largest transfer of wealth in history, a treasure that Paul Schervish, director of the Center for Wealth and Philanthropy at Boston College, estimates to be at least $41 trillion, which the Baby Boomers will pass on to their heirs and beneficiaries until 2052. At a conference many years ago, Harold learned of an interesting program to encourage people to make bequests to their favorite Jewish organizations.

"The insight into a legacy giving campaign," Grinspoon explained to Tablet, "came from two amazing women, Gail Litman [z"l] and Marjory Kaplan, who developed a strategy for training and incentivizing organizations to prioritize legacy conversations in the San Diego Jewish community." Grinspoon says it took him some time to appreciate the plan's power, but once he did, he was all in. "If we help organizations see the merit of prioritizing endowments, and if we use a gentle approach and some financial incentives to get organizations to actually do the work of asking supporters for legacy gifts to build endowments, we can help secure a stronger future," he explained. "And many people who are asked for a legacy gift not only say yes, but they also make cash gifts today. Why? Because they were asked! People feel good about finding a place for their wealth. That includes current giving as well as after-lifetime giving. We all appreciate knowing our legacy will live on long after we are gone."

Grinspoon brought Litman over to HGF, and in 2010, with her model, set up the new national initiative that became LIFE & LEGACY. Grinspoon only regrets he didn't do it earlier. He feels if he had established the program 20 to 30 years ago, "the Jewish day schools would be in a completely different position because they would have wealth." Jews have long left bequests to hospitals, universities, and charities, in part because they have been aggressively courted. But Jewish institutions haven't been as well organized. Now, Grinspoon's LIFE & LEGACY offers training, support, and monetary incentives to motivate Jewish organizations to secure "after-lifetime commitments." LIFE & LEGACY has 63 partner communities that work with a combined 700 organizations. In 10 years, it has secured $1 billion in legacy commitments, mostly through small and medium-size donations. If people donate to their alma maters, why not to their beloved Jewish day camps?

Still energetic — a tall, lanky man, he is an active swimmer, hiker, and whitewater rafter — Grinspoon took up sculpting six years ago. He searches out dead, leafless trunks of trees from the woods, quarters them, refinishes or paints the boughs, and reconstitutes the large-scale structures in his own way. He then places the sculpture back on its feet in nature for a second life. One might say the genius of his endeavors — the renovated apartment complexes, the creation of a common library for unaffiliated Jewish families, the development of permanent funding mechanisms for institutions in need, the resurrected trees — has been to heal what was once sundered — in himself as much as among his people.

As he reflects on his long journey in his video, Grinspoon smiles his boyish smile, eyes flashing: "I love being a philanthropist."

Emily Benedek has written for Rolling Stone, The New York Times, Newsweek, The Washington Post, and Mosaic, among other publications. She is the author of five books. ■

Calendar

October 2020

The Calendar has been updated to reflect events that are happening only online. Always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here. For prayer services, check congregation websites.

Thursday 1

Walking Club: WTBE. 9a.m.

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Jewish Meditation: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.

Pirke Avot with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 5p.m.

Put together a Lulav: Chabad. 6:30p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

Friday 2

Erev Sukkot, Candle Lighting 6:53p.m.

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

Saturday 3

Sukkot, Havdallah 7:51p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

Sunday 4

Sukkot

Zohar Study in a Virtual Sukkah: Pardes Hannah. 11a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11 a.m.- noon.

AARC Book Club. 1946 book by Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning. Email Greg Saltzman, gsaltzman@albion.edu for info, 1-2:30p.m.

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.

Monday 5

Sukkot

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin. BIC. 3:30p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m.

WTBE Fiber Arts. 7 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom.. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 6

Sukkot

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 7

Sukkot

A Taste of Age-ing to Sage-ing: Re-envisioning Elderhood: Pardes Hannah. Noon to 1:30 p.m..

Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood: TBE. Adult Education with Rabbi Whinston .1 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online. 8 p.m.

Thursday 8,

Sukkot

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Jewish Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.

Pirke Avot with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 5p.m.

Opening Function - Virtual Hugs: Women of Temple Beth Emeth Membership, 7:45 to 9:00p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

Friday 9

Sukkot, Candle Lighting 6:41p.m.

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

Shemeni Atzeret dancing with Torah: Chabad. After services.

Saturday 10

Havdallah 7:39p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

Musical Simchat Torah: BIC. 7p.m.

Sunday 11

Simchat Torah

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.

Monday 12

Historical Novel Reading Group: WTBE. Geraldine Brooks, Caleb's Crossing., Contact Molly Lindner, burnham@umich.edu. 12:30 p.m.

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin. BIC. 3:30p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m.

Fiber Arts: WTBE. 7 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom.. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 13

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.

Free Seating: How an Overcrowded Detroit Synagogue Transformed American Judaism, A Lecture by Dr. Jonathan Sarna: Jewish Historical Society of Michigan. Via Zoom, JHSM members: $10, Non-members: $18, info@michjewishhistory.org or call 248-915-1826 to register. 2p.m.

Spirituality Book Club with Cantor Annie Rose: TBE. Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life In Judaism by Sarah Hurwitz. 7:30p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. See first Tuesday of month.

Wednesday 14

Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood: TBE. Adult Education with Rabbi Whinston .1 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

Thursday 15

Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Spirituality Book Club with Cantor Annie Rose: TBE. Here All Along: Finding Meaning, Spirituality, and a Deeper Connection to Life In Judaism by Sarah Hurwitz. Noon.

Between the World Wars: Great Creativity And Growing Crisis: Frankel Center. In partnership with the Posen Library, Todd M. Endelman, Zvi Gitelman,aAnd Deborah Dash Moore will discuss their new book. 4p.m.

Pirke Avot with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 5p.m.

Arts Around Town: Art Talks with Wendy Evans: JCC. How to Look at Art with the Eyes of an Artist. 7p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

Friday 16

Candle Lighting 6:30p.m.

Bereshit Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

Saturday 17

Havdallah 7:28p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

Sunday 18

Rosh Hodesh Cheshvan

Rosh Hodesh Virtual Minyan: Pardes Hannah. 10a.m.

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11a.m.- noon.

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.

Rosh Hodesh Women's Circle: Pardes Hannah. 7p.m.

Monday 19

Rosh Hodesh Cheshvan

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin. BIC. 3:30p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom.. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 20

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.

Translating the Sacred Word: Frankel Center. With Aviya Kushner, Author and Language Columnist at The Forward. Go to lsa.umich.edu/judaic for more information. 2p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 21

Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood: TBE. Adult Education with Rabbi Whinston .1 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

Thursday 22

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.

Pirke Avot with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 5p.m.

Arts Around Town: Art Talks with Wendy Evans: Musée de Louvre, Paris JCC. 7p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

Friday 23

Candle Lighting 6:19p.m. Noach

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

Saturday 24

Havdallah 7:18p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

Artemisia Vocal Trio Concert: WTBE. 7:30p.m.

Sunday 25

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11a.m.- noon.

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.

Monday 26

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin. BIC. 3:30p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom.. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7 p.m.

Tuesday 27

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Wednesday 28

Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood: TBE. Adult Education with Rabbi Whinston .1 p.m.

Voices of Jewish Women with Professor Elisheva Carlebach: Frankel Center. In partnership with the Posen Library. 4p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

Thursday 29

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.

Pirke Avot with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 5p.m.

Arts Around Town: Art Talks with Wendy Evans: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Women in Art JCC. 7p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

Friday 30

Candle Lighting 6:09 p.m. Lech Lecha

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

Saturday 31

Havdallah 7:09p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

Phone numbers, websites and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734.445.1910, aarecon.org

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org

Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org

October events with BIC

Online Services

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel Congregation for services, classes, and events, all virtual. Below is a list of the links to participate in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is now livestreaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links will also be available on the Beth Israel homepage (www.bethisrael-aa.org). Please note that passwords are used. Contact the office to get the passwords at office@bethisrael-aa.org.

Evening Minyan

Sunday–Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

Friday Evening Servicesabbalat Shabbat Service at 6 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services Saturday at 9:30 a.m.

Sukkot Services

Saturday, October 3, and Sunday, October 4, at 9:30 a.m.

Join Beth Israel for the celebration of Sukkot. The lulav and etrog will be used during these services. For more details about other events on these holidays, please refer to the calendar at www.bethisrael-aa.org.

Shemini Atzeret and Musical Simchat Torah

Saturday, October 10, at 9:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. Shemini Atzeret services will be held beginning at 9:30 a.m. At 7 p.m. Join Beth Israel for a musical Simchat Torah via Zoom. Watch for more details soon.

The Bible Players are Coming!

Watch for more details of a special children's event featuring The Bible Players.

Classes and Groups

Theology Book Club

Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

Beth Israel Congregation's Theology Book Club welcomes you to join them to read together and discuss books on Jewish thought and beliefs. The books are in English. Contact Paul Shifrin at 248-514-7276 for more information.

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin
Mondays at 3:30 p.m.

Rabbi Dobrusin will be facilitating a Talmud class online on Monday afternoons from 3:30-4:30. While we will read the Hebrew/Aramaic text, translations are available and all discussions will be in English. All are welcome to join regardless of the level of your familiarity with Hebrew.

Pirke Avot: Teachings of the Sages
Thursdays at 5 p.m.

Rabbi Dobrusin will facilitate Zoom discussions on the classic Rabbinic text: Pirkei Avot. While the title is usually translated as "Teachings of the Sages," a more interesting translation is "Chapters of Fundamental Principles." Pirkei Avot consists of short rabbinic statements concerning ethics, faith, and interpersonal relationships. Reading Pirkei Avot helps us focus on the values and principles that guide our lives. We will study the text in English, referring occasionally to the Hebrew. The text can be found in the Shabbat morning Sim Shalom siddur.

Tot Shabbat with the Caine Family
Friday, October 16 and 30, at 5:30 p.m.

Join Rav Nadav, Lynne, Merav, and Ziva for Kabbalat Tot Shabbat by Zoom! Bring in Shabbat with music, dancing, candle lighting, and kiddush. Invite your friends! If you are new to the program and have not received your special Tot Shabbat bag, contact Sam at szielinksi@bethisrael-aa.org. ■

Jewish philanthropist Susan Sandler is donating $200 million to fight racism

Josefin Dolsten, originally for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency

Susan Sandler, a progressive Jewish philanthropist, said she is donating $200 million to racial justice causes in this country.

Sandler said Monday that she was establishing the Susan Sandler Fund to support a number of organizations, led by people of color, that are fighting racism in the South and Southwest, The New York Times reported.

"I have come to believe that, rather than trying to use persuasive papers and reports to attempt to change the minds of those who are making decisions, the more effective way to transform societal priorities and public policies is to change the climate and environment in which decisions are made," she wrote in a Medium post announcing the fund. "Specifically, to make the faces of the people with whom policy makers have to interact reflect the full racial, cultural, and economic diversity of the population that is affected by those policies."

Sandler said she was inspired to think about her legacy after being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumor four years ago with a median survival rate of 18 months.

She is the daughter of Marion and Herbert Sandler, who founded and served as co-CEOs of Golden West Financial Corp., which was the second-largest savings and loan association in the country. Marion Sandler, the daughter of Jewish immigrants from Lithuania and Russia, was the first woman to serve as a CEO of a Fortune 500 company.

"In 1994, long before the recent awakening in corporate America about diversity and inclusion, my parents diversified the board of their company, taking a rapid and decisive series of actions that created a governing body where women and people of color comprised the majority of its members," Sandler wrote on Medium.

The Sandlers went on to found the Sandler Foundation, which has given some $1 billion to progressive causes, health, human rights, investigative journalism and more, according to its website. The couple also supported the San Francisco-based Jewish Community Endowment Fund, according to J. The Jewish News of Northern California. ■

November 3 is Bob Blumenthal's birthday!
Please celebrate with him by

VOTING!

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OCTOBER 28, 2020 | 4PM – 5PM EDT | VIA ZOOM

In partnership with Case Western Reserve University

Professor **ELISHEVA CARLEBACH** will discuss **VOICES OF JEWISH WOMEN**

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Tishrei Exposed

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

On Friday night October 2, we start the holiday of Sukkot. To have an appreciation of what Sukkot is all about, let's look at the month of Tishrei (the first month of the Jewish calendar). We see that Tishrei is divided into two parts. The first part of the month is Rosh Hashanah, the beginning of the new year. Then we have Yom Kippur 10 days later. These two holidays comprise roughly the first half of the month of Tishrei. The main way we serve Hashem during this time is through awe. We ask for forgiveness for our past misdeeds and make resolutions for improvements in the future. This happens through teshuva (repentance), in which we subjugate ourselves to God. This is all done in the first half of the month of Tishrei.

The second half of the month is the opposite; the emphasis is on happiness. The Torah tells us that during the time of Sukkot it has to be v'samachta, b'chagecha. We should rejoice in our holidays and only be happy. This includes the happiness of when they drew the water in Jerusalem and poured it on the holy altar, culminating in the happiness of Simchas Torah at the end of the month of Tishrei. So we notice the symmetry of the month, the first half serving God with awe, and the second half with joy. The truth is whatever we have done during Rosh Hashanah and into Yom Kippur in awe is revealed in the holiday of Sukkot in the form of happiness. More specifically, we see Rosh Hashanah and the 10 days of Teshuva and Yom Kippur reflect in Sukkot. How does that work?

Let's look at Rosh Hashanah first. The main mitzvah of Rosh Hashanah is the sounding of the shofar. How many "toots" do we have to sound? It has to be 100. The hundred is broken down into 60 tekiah, the plain sound; 20 sfarim, the broken sound; and 20 teruah toots. This fits right into Sukkot. Why? When you have a Sukkah, what is the main part of it? It is the covering called sechach. In Judaism the letters of the aleph bet also have numerical values. So if we take the numerical value of the word for the covering, sechach, it adds up to 100 — the required number of shofar sounds! Not only are the shofar "toots" related to the Sukkot roof covering numerically, but also symbolically — as we shall see. That's for Rosh Hashanah — let's now look at Yom Kippur.

On Yom Kippur the main service in the Holy Temple was the High Priest going into the Holy of Holies and burning the incense. The teachings of Chassidus explain that the smoke of the incense went up to the ceiling of the inner chamber and covered it. Because of this, the Jewish people merited the clouds of glory surrounding and protecting them while they were in the desert. This is really what Sukkot is all about. In the sukkah, we look up and the sechach is supposed to remind us of the way God sheltered and protected us in the desert when we left Egypt. So here we see a direct connection of Yom Kippur, burning the incense, creating the cloud in the Holy of Holies that represented God's protection. Symmetrically speaking, we have the 10 days of teshuva, 10 days of repentance that start out with two days of Rosh Hashanah and end with one day of Yom Kippur. So between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we have seven days — a complete week. The week repeats twice, the first in the way of teshuva — that's called 10 days of teshuva, of Repentance — with seven days of repentance separate from Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Then on Sukkot, we have a second week, with seven days of happiness during the holiday. So, just as between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we have a complete week of doing teshuva, this time we have a complete week of being happy. That is the complete week of Sukkot.

Another thing about these days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is that we are supposed to spend a complete week to correct the past year. Sunday of that week corrects all previous Sundays of that year, etc. During the holiday of Sukkot, we have the seven days of happiness, which are supposed to give us and supply the year with happiness that every day of the year is represented in this week of happiness. So if we are happy in these seven days, then we'll be happy throughout the year on every day, as a result of this complete week of happiness. Meaning that the Sunday of Sukkot will give happiness to all Sundays, etc.

So this is the connection of the holiday of the first half of Tishrei, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, to Sukkot: that whatever is done in the High Holy days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur is reflected in Sukkot, but in the form of Simcha — we add as joy that happens during the holiday of Sukkot. Being happy on those seven days will help throughout the year so we should be able to serve God with joy. This joy that we have during Sukkot should not only be a spiritual joy, but should also be a physical joy. It should permeate all the way down to physical enjoyment. That's why, according to Jewish law, on the holiday of Sukkot we have to express happiness in physical things. As the Rabbis say, true happiness comes from eating meat and drinking wine — or whatever physical form makes you happy. When we have this happiness in the holiday of Sukkot, then this happiness goes to our life throughout the entire year, in which we should be fully happy — God willing, Amen! ■

Unity on Sukkot

Rabbi Jared Anstandig, special to the WJN

On Sukkot, which begins on the evening of October 2, we say that we shake the lulav, but that is not quite precise. After all, what we oftentimes call the lulav is not just a lula(a palm frond) but a bundle also containing hadas (myrtle) and arava (willow). And, of course, we cannot forget the etrog (citron) that is also held along with this lulav bundle. Part of the mitzva of lulav as we know it today is that we take all four of these species, the three-part lulav bundle and the etrog, and we shake them all together.

This wasn't always the case. Rabbi Yosef Karo (15th century, Israel) in his work Beit Yosef (Orach Chaim 551:11) notes that this concept of shaking all four together is relatively recent in origin. In fact, it is found nowhere in the Torah and nowhere in the Talmud or its commentaries. Rabbi Karo dates the earliest recording of this practice to the 13th century, quoting the following story told by Rabbi Menachem Recanti (13th century, Italy):

> On the first night of Sukkot, I hosted a certain German guest named Rabbi Yitzchak. In a dream that night, I saw this guest writing the four-letter name of God, known as the Tetragrammaton. But, when he wrote the four letters, he spaced the final letter far apart from the preceding letters. When I asked him why, he responded that such was the practice in his hometown. I immediately erased and rewrote the name with the final letter closer to the rest. When I awoke, I was confused by the meaning of the dream until the next morning when I saw this very same guest shaking the lulav but holding the etrog far apart from the other three species. At this point I understood that just as God's name must be written with all letters together, so too all the species must be shaken together.

Indeed, as the result of Rabbi Recanti's dream, Rabbi Karo rules that we ought to combine all four species together to fulfil the mitzva of shaking the lulav.

What do we make of this dream? Is there a deeper significance to the comparison of an incomplete lulav bundle to an incomplete name of God? The Midrash (Bemidbar 30:12) suggests that the four species represent various types of Jews: The etrog, with a taste and smell, represents those who have studied Torah and have performed many good deeds. The lulav has a taste but no smell, reflecting those who have Torah, but no good deeds. The hadas, having a smell but no taste, represents those who have good deeds, but no Torah study. And finally, the arava, lacking both taste and smell, reflects those who have neither Torah study nor good deeds. When we take all four plants together, it is equivalent to bringing these four types of Jews together. This Midrash can illuminate the meaning of Recanti's dream. When we, as a people, are separated and unwilling to work together, God, as it were, is incomplete. But, when we do come together, from the etrogim to the aravot among us, that brings unity to our people, and completion to God. May this new year of 5781 be a year of togetherness and unity for us all. ■

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Wishing everyone health and safety in the new year

Ron & Lonnie Sussman

The dean Of America's intellectual pro-Israel defenders has died

By Moshe Phillips

Edward Alexander, the Jewish scholar and author who passed away August 22 at age 84, was called "Seattle's Jeremiah" by his hometown newspaper. An Israeli publication once hailed him as "Jewry's premier polemicist." For more than half a century, Alexander fought for Israel and the Jewish people in the trenches of the battlefield of ideas.

Alexander grew up in the heavily Jewish Brownsville section of Brooklyn. The "most vivid and satisfying memory" of his childhood occurred in May 1948, when he was 11 years old. It involved Brooklyn Dodgers star Jackie Robinson, who he and his boyhood pals regarded as "the greatest man in the world, and David Ben-Gurion who was "a close second to Robinson in our esteem."

"These two heroic figures came together for me almost magically when I heard Robinson address a block party to celebrate Israel's independence," Alexander recalled.

"I consider myself lucky," he wrote, "never to have been disillusioned about what my parents taught me: that both men symbolized the belated righting of ancient historical wrongs, that Robinson was indeed a uniquely courageous figure and that the birth of Israel just a few years after the destruction of European Jewry was one of the greatest affirmations of life ever made by a martyred people . . . "

After earning his bachelor's degree in English literature at Columbia, Alexander completed his master's and Ph.D. at the University of Minnesota. That was where he met his future wife, Leah. She, too, was a scholar of English literature, and her senior thesis on Henry James was published as a book. Leah passed away in 2017.

In 1960 the young couple settled in Seattle, where Alexander became professor of English at the University of Washington and, later, the first chairman of the school's Jewish Studies program.

Alexander's academic career began in conventional fashion, with him teaching a full load of courses and authoring books that were well regarded in his field although they did not attract the attention of the wider public.

He wrote volumes about such noted 18th Century literary figures as Matthew Arnold and John Stuart Mill as well as more recent giants, including Lionel Trilling and Irving Howe.

But the United Nation's 1975 resolution that Zionism was racism and the rise of the Soviet Jewry protest movement in the 1970s inspired the Alexanders to dive headfirst into the world of Jewish controversy. In 1976, Edward and Leah traveled to the Soviet Union to assist refuseniks. They were detained by the KGB for 24 hours and then summarily expelled.

A photo of the Alexanders looking weary but unbowed, taken shortly after their expulsion from the USSR, appeared in the *Jerusalem Post*. It would not be the last the Jewish world would hear from Edward Alexander.

Jeremiah in the pit

In late 1976, the *Jewish Transcript*, a Seattle weekly newspaper, inaugurated an unusual column called "From the Pit," by an author using the pseudonymous byline "Jeremiah." Three young professors at the University of Washington took turns ghostwriting the weekly installments: Alexander, historian Robert Loewenberg, and religious studies professor Deborah Lipstadt.

An introductory note appended to the first From the Pit column explained the significance of the name: "Jeremiah, who prophesied in the period immediately prior to the destruction of the First Temple . . . sought to impress upon the Jews that their neighbors wished to destroy them," the editors explained. "His countrymen refused to act to stave off this danger. They chose, instead, to silence Jeremiah by flinging him into a pit."

Alexander, Lipstadt, and Loewenberg took upon themselves the task of trying to awaken their readers regarding the threats facing Jews on campus, in the community, and beyond.

Their hard-hitting columns make for especially fascinating reading today, because they show how little has changed. Topics included anti-Zionism on the University of Washington campus, hostility toward Israel from the political left, and attempts to enforce racial categories in Seattle's public schools.

Some readers appreciated Jeremiah's frankness. Others reacted more like the Jews in the days of the original Jeremiah and put pressure on the editors to cancel the column. Eventually, an installment that was going to strongly criticize the Vatican's hostility toward Israel unnerved the editors so much that they discontinued From the Pit.

For a time, Alexander, Lipstadt, and Lowenberg continued working together as members of the Academic Advisory Committee of Americans for a Safe Israel (AFSI). Then they went their separate ways. Lipstadt launched a career in Holocaust studies, while Lowenberg created a think tank in Israel to promote free enterprise. At the time of his death Alexander was serving on AFSI's five-member Advisory Council. Alexander continued to fight for Israel at the University of Washington and beyond with his most powerful weapon: his pen.

Professor of terror

By the time the *Jewish Transcript* stopped publishing Alexander, his writings were already attracting a following in the broader community, and he had a fast-growing list of editors who were delighted to run his witty and sharp-tongued essays in defense of Israel, whether or not they agreed with his point of view.

A visit to campus by the anti-Israel journalist Alexander Cockburn prompted Alexander to denounce him, in a *Seattle Times* Op-Ed, as a "basilisk, exhaling poison." That essay not only "sent *Times* readers to their dictionaries" to find out what a basilisk was, a local reporter noted, but also triggered a series of "vituperative" and threatening phone calls to the Alexanders' home.

They reportedly bought an answering machine before Alexander's next article was published.

Cockburn later called Alexander a "deranged Holocaust revisionist" after Alexander wrote, in an American Jewish Congress publication, that while a number of groups were persecuted by the Nazis, the Jews were targeted uniquely because the Nazis were determined to murder every Jew on earth.

Alexander was unfazed by the enemies he made while defending the Jewish state in periodicals around the world, starting with the Arab-American Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC). The ADC called Alexander "the intellectual hit man for the Israeli right wing" after he wrote an essay in *Commentary* in 1989 exposing the pro-terrorist positions taken by Edward Said, who was then a rising young star in the academic world.

ADC president Abdeen Jabara tried to orchestrate a counterstrike against Alexander by mobilizing academics to write ostensibly independent letters to the editor of *Commentary*. Jabara sent a form letter to numerous professors, alerting them about Alexander's critique of Said and imploring them. "It is important that *Commentary* receive feedback in response to this unconscionable piece. . . . The most effective response is to ensure that individuals with professional credentials such as yours respond directly to the magazine."

Letters responding to Alexander's article filled twelve pages in a subsequent issue of *Commentary*.

All hell broke loose

Michael Lerner, editor of the left-wing magazine *Tikkun*, accused Alexander of "verbal violence" because Alexander uncovered a series of extreme statements that Lerner made in the 1960s. Among other things, Lerner had written, "The Jewish community is racist, internally corrupt, and an apologist for the worst aspects of American capitalism and imperialism," and "The synagogue as currently established will have to be smashed."

In response to Alexander's article, Lerner said that he was sorry he had made those statements, but they were part of his "adolescent rebellion," although he was 27 at the time. Lerner announced he would sue any newspaper that published Alexander's article. The *Jewish Voice and Opinion* of New Jersey published it anyway. Lerner did not sue.

Lerner's anger at Alexander did not quickly subside. Three years later, Lerner and Alexander were invited to participate in a panel discussion in New York City about the Israeli-Arab conflict. Lerner said he would not participate if Alexander was included. Alexander was bumped.

During the Q&A, the chairman of the event invited Alexander, who was in the audience, to offer a brief comment. Alexander later described what ensued:

"Even before I reached the floor microphone, Lerner began bellowing into his microphone that he wouldn't stand for this, that it violated the 'rules of the discussion.' . . . Every time I tried, Lerner would raise his voice to interrupt. When I said that 'it's clear Mr. Lerner hasn't forgotten the tactics he learned in the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley,' all hell broke loose. . . . Bedlam continued for 15 to 20 minutes." When the next questioner criticized Lerner, he "rose in a rage and stormed out of the hall."

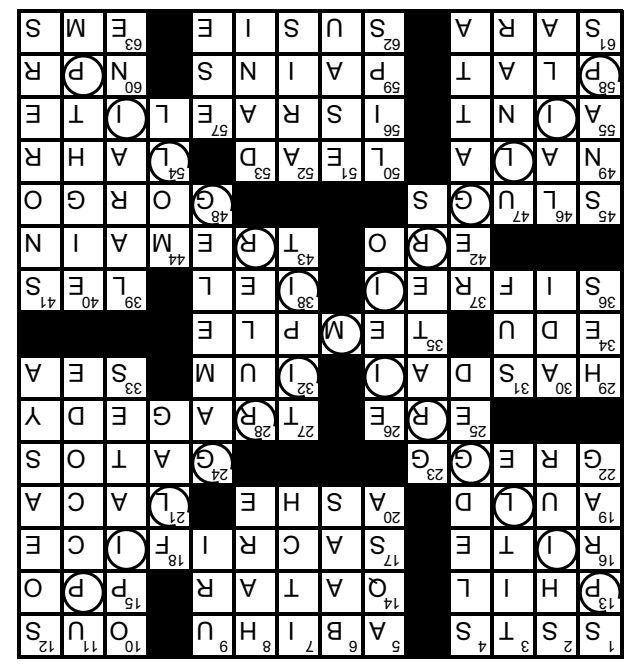
A new battle

A star in the field of English literature studies, Alexander was repeatedly invited to serve as a visiting professor at Hebrew University. He and Leah lived in Jerusalem for a number of years, and their home became the center of a group of influential Zionist intellectuals. Alexander was particularly close to Shmuel Katz, the former member of the Irgun High Command and biographer of Revisionist Zionist leader Vladimir Ze'ev Jabotinsky.

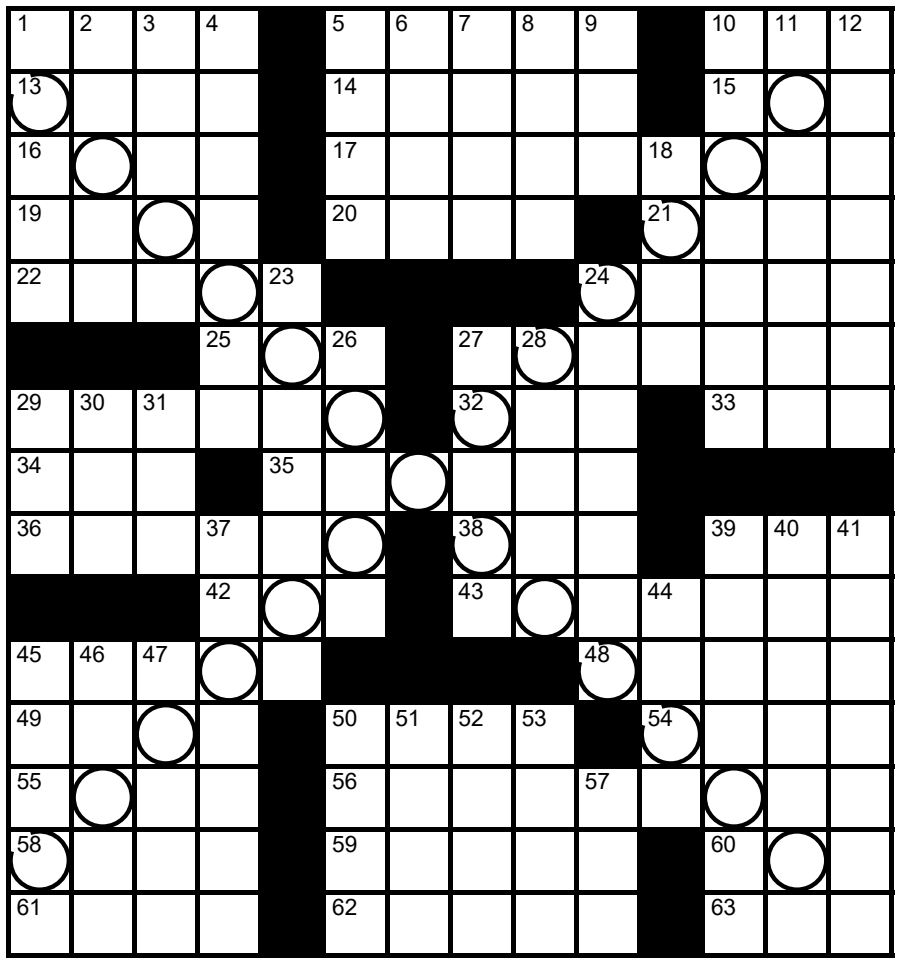
Although Alexander's literary scholarship continued over the years, an increasingly large portion of his time was devoted to what he termed "the Jewish wars."

His books included *The Jewish Idea and Its Enemies* (1988), *With Friends Like These: The Jewish Critics of Israel* (1993), *The Jewish Wars: Reflections by One of the Belligerents* (1996), and *Jews Against Themselves* (2015). Earlier this year, he stood for election as candidate to be a delegate to the World Zionist Congress with Herut Zionists, the slate associated with the activist Zionist ideology of Jabotinsky. It was the first time he was a Zionist Congress candidate.

Moshe Phillips is national director of Herut North America's U.S. division; Herut is an international movement for Zionist pride and education and is dedicated to the ideals of pre-World War II Zionist leader Ze'ev Jabotinsky. Herut's website is www.herutna.org. ■



CROSSWORD PUZZLE



Across

1. Former Concorde fleet
5. Brother of Nadav
10. Some kosher symbols
13. Main character in "Groundhog Day"
14. 2022 World Cup host
15. HMO alternative
16. Shop follower
17. What those in the circled letters would bring to the 35-Across, once
19. "Lang Syne" preceder
20. Queens stadium name
21. City across the continent from NY, NY
22. One of the Allman Brothers
24. Cats, south of the border
25. " ___ I saw Elba
27. Many a Miller play
29. Ibn Shaprut of note
32. Common suffix on chemical elements
33. Red or White
34. YU email ender
35. Destination for those in the circled letters during the Three Festivals, once
36. ___ Torah
38. Biblical name suffix
39. Guitar star Paul
42. Ending for ranch or Canyon
43. "Johnny ___" (children's book set during the American Revolution)
45. Slimy crawlers
48. 1961 British movie monster ala "Godzilla"
49. Disney lion queen
50. Head the pack
54. "If I Were King of the Forest" singer Bert
55. "Say it ___ so, Joe"
56. One who would party hearty on Sukkot at the 35-Across
58. ___ypus (Aussie animal)
59. They might be growing
60. D.C.-based radio network
61. A Netanyahu
62. Fishbein of "Kosher by Design"
63. Hatzolah letters

Down

1. Mine roof support
2. Jewish measurement or class
3. "Mila 18" or "The Hope", e.g.
4. Hit with a heavy hammer
5. Al-___, building that stands where 35-Across once did
6. "Old MacDonald" sounds
7. Chickenpox symptom
8. Animal with one kosher sign
9. ___ L'Tzedek
10. Morphine and codeine, for two
11. Scanned bar
12. "___ child could do it"
18. Prop in some football games
23. Tools for cheese
24. Cause of a limp
26. "Old MacDonald" refrain
27. ___ in (score without shooting at basketball)
28. David or Asa, e.g.
29. Bulls, rams and bucks
30. Unisex Israeli name
31. Yam follower
37. Boating race
39. Original "SNL" cast member Newman
40. Early bedtime, perhaps
41. Annoying bunkmates
44. "___ Flanders" (Defoe novel)
45. Alternatives to claps
46. Undefeated boxer Ali
47. "Funny bone" nerve
50. They're needed for blowing shofar
51. Uncle of Asher
52. Ben Canaan and Onassis
53. Shortened name of one who survived the lion's den
57. Rechovot to Jerusalem dir.

Games we played

Excerpts from Letters to My Grandchildren: Childhood Stories*, by Marianne Adler Aaron*

Behold, I have lived with

an entire book written within me.

Your very teaching is within

the inmost parts of my being. (Psalm 40)

"Dear Grandchildren!" That is how every chapter of this book originally started when Marianne Adler Aaron set off to record stories of her youth through email letters to her six grandchildren. Below is letter five, "Games we played," in honor of the joys of Sukkot.

Dear Grandchildren,

I've tried very hard to think of the games that we played, but I remember very few. The only board game I can think of was Mensch, Ärger Dich Nicht!" which literally means, "Man, don't get mad!" but it is called Sorry here in America. I loved riding my bicycle, but I once had a terrible accident making a U-turn on the street trying to keep up with the boys (my brother, his friends, and Karl Pintz, Sandro's dad, who lived downstairs). There were three floors in our building, with two apartments on each floor plus rooms on a fourth floor for maid's quarters where our Anna lived).

Weather permitting, we spent time outside playing ball and hide and seek, and we also went to the Louisenpark, which was just around the corner. We weren't allowed to go there alone, though, so we had to wait until Anna or my mother took us. I liked to take my scooter and Anna would buy us ice cream from a vendor at the park. We also had a porch off the kitchen facing a small backyard that had a huge tree, and we would play out there.

In the house, our favorite pretend games were related to going to Temple services. We had a bay window with long curtains in our living room. We would open and close the curtains, making believe that we were opening and closing the Torah Ark. Then we would make Hakofot around the room (that is, we acted as if we were carrying the Torah around). The other game we enjoyed playing was Choir. I would "sing" and Sam would conduct. One day my mother came running into the room because she heard me screaming at the top of my lungs. "What are you doing to her?" she demanded of Sam. "I'm Mr. Sinzheimer (the choir conductor) and she's supposed to be the choir and I'm telling her to sing louder!" That's when Sam started his conducting career and I my singing in choirs.

Every Chanukah, my father set up our train set that went through much of the living room. We loved playing with that, but I don't remember it being up at other times of the year. They didn't have too many children's story books in those days, but we did have many of the very same fairy tales you know today. I never got tired of hearing Snow White or Hansel and Gretel. Besides reading these stories to us, my father was an incredible storyteller. He would either make up stories or tell us biblical legends. We would ask for our favorites over and over again.

I only remember going to the movies once. There was a sign on the movie theater that said, "Jews are not welcome," so you took a chance going in. One day my father took me to see Shirley Temple, who was a big star in Hollywood although she was my age. After we came to the United States, when my father found out that he got the job in Worcester, he treated me to another movie, and we went to see Shirley Temple in *Bluebird of Happiness*. I was so surprised that she spoke English, too! (In Germany they had dubbed in the dialogue and I guess I didn't notice.)

As long as I can remember, I loved to draw and would spend all my spare time drawing pictures. My favorite thing was drawing girls and dressing them up. I never cared too much for dolls, although I once got a beauty for taking my cod liver oil without fussing. I wish that I had kept it, because it would be worth a lot of money now. I guess I was around six when I started piano lessons, but I never enjoyed it as much as I liked singing. I would go along for rehearsals at an early age and I loved listening to the adult and children's choirs singing. ■

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Simchas and Sorrows

Mazel Tov

Rachel Goldstein and Aaron Willis on the birth of their daughter, Yael Ruth, sister of Lila.

Susan Pollans and Alan Levy on the birth of their granddaughter, Willa Thalia Mickelson, daughter of Alissa and Dan Mickelson.

Eileen and Ed Nadler on the birth of their grandson, Jonah Lev, son of Rachel & Reuven Katz and brother of Rosie Katz.

Michelle Silver, daughter of Dorit Adler and Terry Silver, and Stephen Levine, son of Leslie and Ken Levine on their wedding.

Haran and Nikki Rashes and Laurie Lichter on the engagement of their daughter, Ilana Rashes, to Jeremy Levy. Ilana is also the granddaughter of Paul and Carolyn Lichter.

Bat Mitzvah of Sula Steiger – Saturday, August 1st

Bar Mitzvah of Joshua Jacob – Saturday, August 8th

Bat Mitzvah of Alita Cunningham – Saturday, August 22nd

Bar Mitzvah of Zane Swerdlow – Saturday, August 29th

Condolences

Audrey and Nora Weiss on the death of their mother, Mary Jane Northrop, also wife (estranged) of Fred Weiss, July 20.

The family of Marilyn Greenspan, sister of Gene Silverman, sister-in-law of Alida Silverman, died Tuesday, August 4th

The family of Raymond Failer, father of Sari Mills (Aaron), grandfather of Eleanor and Ruth, died Monday, August 10th

Nancy Goldstein on the death of her mother, Ann Gehr, August 13.

Jonathan Greenberg on the death of his father, Daniel Greenberg, August 15.

The family of Michele Elyachar, aunt of Rabbi Josh Whinston (Sarah), died Saturday, August 22nd

The family of Ruth Harris, grandmother of Lisa Harris, great-grandmother of Lila Harris, died Monday, August 24th..

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- **Independent Living for Blind Seniors**
- **Technology Talk**

LIVE Q&A WITH INGRID RICKS 1PM

Ingrid Ricks answers questions about her talk, Harnessing Adversity, and about her bestselling memoir, *Hippie Boy*.

Ingrid Ricks presents *Hippie Boy* in an online author event Oct. 6 at 7pm on AADL.TV

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Will Branner		*Mean Girls*
Abby Corrigan		*Fun Home*
Lorna Courtney		*Dear Evan Hansen, West Side Story*
McKenzie Kurtz		*Frozen*
Chelsea Packard		*Wicked*
Geoff Packard		*Bandstand*
Ashley Park		*Mean Girls*
Alyah Chanelle Scott		*Book of Mormon*
Justin Showell		*Hamilton*
Bobby Conte Thornton		*Company, A Bronx Tale*
Ryan Vasquez		*Hamilton*

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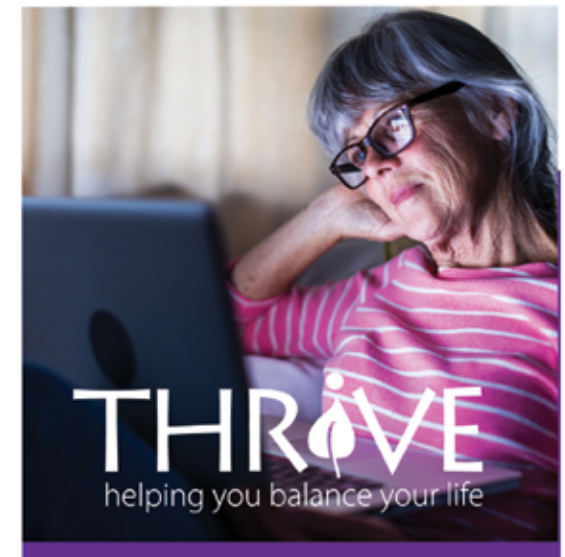

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